SECRET
HISTORIES,
NOVELS, and POEMS,

Written by

Mrs. *Eliza Haywood.*

VOL. II.

CONTAINING,

I. The BRITISH RECLUSE: Or, Secret Hiſtory of CLEOMIRA, ſuppoſed dead. A Novel.

II. The INJUR'D HUSBAND: Or, *Miſtaken Reſentment.* A Novel.

III. POEMS on Several Occaſions.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

BRITISH RECLUSE:

OR, THE

Secret Hiſtory

OF

CLEOMIRA,

Suppoſed DEAD.

A NOVEL.

Women are govern'd by a ſtubborn Fate;
Their Love's inſuperable as their Hate!
No Merit their Averſion can remove,
Nor ill Requital can efface their Love.

WALLER.

The FIFTH EDITION.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

Britiſh RECLUSE.

OF all the *Foibles* Youth and Inexperience is liable to fall into, there is none, I think, of more dangerous Conſequence, than too eaſily giving Credit to what we hear: It is always the Source of a thouſand Inadvertencies, and often leads the way to a numerous Train of deſtructive Paſſions. If we could bring ourſelves to depend on nothing but what we had Proof for, what a world of Diſcontent ſhould we avoid! *Hope* and *Fear* would then be buried in *Certainty*; and *Love* and *Reſentment* never be at Enmity with *Reaſon*. Whereas, by relying on Appearances (and perhaps ſuch too, as are form'd only by our own Wiſhes and Apprehenſions) we, for a ſeeming *Good*, embrace a real *Evil*, and run into Miſtakes, which, without the Interpoſition of a peculiar Providence, muſt be fatal to our Intereſt and Peace of Mind, in whatever Affair we ſuffer our Belief to be impoſed on.

LOVE! as it is one of the firſt Paſſions for which the Soul finds Room, ſo it is alſo the moſt eaſily de-

ceiv'd: The Good Opinion which it naturally inſpires, of the darling Object, makes it almoſt an Impoſſibility to ſuſpect his Honour and Sincerity; and the Pleaſure which ariſes from a Self-aſſurance of the Truth of what we ſo eagerly deſire, is too great for a young Heart, unaccuſtom'd to ſuch Struggles, to repel.

BUT, the following little Hiſtory (which I can affirm for Truth, having it from the Mouths of thoſe chiefly concerned in it) is a ſad Example of what Miſeries may attend a Woman, who has no other Foundation for Belief in what her Lover ſays to her, than the good Opinion her Paſſion made her conceive of him.

BELINDA, a young Lady of a conſiderable Fortune, in *Warwickſhire*, being oblig'd by ſome Buſineſs to come to *London*, which ſhe had never ſeen before, was recommended, by ſome of her Country Acquaintance, to a Houſe where ſhe might board. The Pleaſantneſs of the Situation, and the good Company ſhe found in it, gave her at once the Charms both of the Town and Country; but being naturally of a reſerv'd Temper, and having ſomething in her Mind which ſeem'd to engroſs her Thoughts, ſhe grew not preſently acquainted with any body. And tho' ſhe obſerv'd, that at every Meal, a Plate of whatever came to Table was carry'd away, before any other Perſon was help'd, yet ſhe never had the Curioſity to aſk to whom it was ſent; till one Day, ſome Gentlemen happening to dine there, who formerly had been Boarders, they began to enquire, of the Gentlewoman of the Houſe, how the *Recluſe* did—if ſhe continued the Solitary Courſe of Life,—and if ſhe had yet been able to find out the Cauſe of her Retirement. To which the Landlady reply'd, That ſhe was ſtill in the ſame Mind, in which they left her; —and that to diſcover the Myſtery of her concealing herſelf ſhe believ'd an utter Impoſſibility. Indeed (ſaid one of the Gentlemen) to *know* the Certainty of ſuch an Affair, may be a little difficult, but I think it no hard Matter to form a very probable

bable *Conjecture*: In my Opinion, no Motive, but *ill-requited Love*, cou'd induce a Lady (ſo young and beautiful, as you deſcribe this to be) to ſuch an obſtinate and peeviſh Reſignation of all the Pleaſures of Life. I rather think (anſwer'd a young Lady who happen'd to be there) 'tis the Effect of Grief for the Death of ſome near and dear Relation; a Parent perhaps, or—How, Madam (interrupted the other Gentleman haſtily) produce me but an Example, ſince the Fall of *Adam*, of ſuch a Conſtancy in Grief, and I ſhall willingly acquieſce to the Sentiments of ſo fine a Lady: But as I am poſitive you cannot, give me leave to ſay, it is not only impracticable, but alſo unnatural. Nor can I agree any more with my Friend's Notion of the Matter, than with your's: All kinds of Paſſion, every body knows, wear off with Time; and *Love*, of all others, as 'tis the gentleſt and is ſubſiſted only by *Delight*, of courſe muſt die, when Delight is at an end. How then, can it be poſſible that a Woman, who has for a whole Twelvemonth liv'd in a Retirement, where ſhe neither has ſeen any body, nor been ſeen, if it were ſo that Love was the Occaſion, ſhou'd not by this be weary both of the *Cauſe* and the *Effect?* No, no, (continu'd he laughing) I rather think, my Landlady, to divert herſelf, and amuſe us, has form'd this Story of a beautiful young Creature, whom, if the Truth were known, I dare ſwear is ſome wither'd Hag, paſt the Uſe of Pleaſures, and keeps herſelf in private, leſt her Countenance ſhould terrify. Very well (anſwer'd the good old Gentlewoman) you may be as merry as you pleaſe with Age; but, Sir, I fancy if you cou'd have perſuaded me to have contriv'd ſome means for you to have come to the ſight of this Hag, as you call her, ſhe has Eyes, which wou'd have convinc'd you, that there is a Power in *Love*, beyond what now you ſeem to imagine of that Paſſion.

ALL Dinner, and ſome Time after, was paſt in this ſort of Converſation; which, tho' *Belinda* had but a

ſmall Share in, yet it fail'd not to excite her Curioſity to a Deſire of knowing as much as ſhe cou'd of this Adventure: And, as ſoon as the Company were gone, and ſhe had an Opportunity of entertaining the Landlady alone, ſhe took an Occaſion to enquire what ſort of Woman the *Recluſe*, as they call'd her, really was,——how long ſhe had been there, and by what Manner introduced. I ſhall make no Scruple (ſaid ſhe) of informing you as far as I am able; but the Account I can give is ſo ſmall, that it will only ſerve to increaſe your Deſire of knowing more. About a Year paſt, being told a Lady in a Chair aſk'd to ſpeak with me, I went to the Door; but not knowing her, look'd a little ſurpriz'd, fancying ſhe might be miſtaken. I believe ſhe gueſs'd what my Thoughts were; and before I had time to diſcloſe 'em, Madam (ſaid ſhe) I have ſomething to communicate to you, which I am not willing any Perſon ſhould be witneſs to; and, if you are at Leiſure, ſhould take it as a Favour if you wou'd give me an Opportunity of diſcourſing you. I then immediately deſir'd her to come into the Parlour; and the Door being ſhut, I am (reſum'd ſhe) an utter Stranger to you, and, indeed, deſign to continue ſo to all the World: It was but by an Accident I heard of the Accommodation you have for Boarders; and gladly would become one, if you approve of it on the Conditions I ſhall propoſe. They muſt be very ſtrange ones (anſwer'd I) that could make me refuſe the Company of a Lady, ſuch as you appear to be: There are too many Charms in that Countenance, not to give me an Ambition of a nearer Acquaintance: I beg therefore, that you will put me out of the Pain of believing there is a Poſſibility that any thing could oblige me to deny myſelf that Honour. She return'd this little Compliment only with a Bow, but which had ſomething in it more graceful and obliging than any Words could be: And after a Pauſe, The Conditions I mean (ſaid ſhe) are only theſe; *Firſt*, That you never will endeavour to know more

of

of me, than I am willing to reveal;—That you will ſuffer no one to enter the Apartment order'd for me, but the Servant who ſhall bring me in my Meat (for I will never dine at Table) and give that Attendance which is neceſſary. And *Laſtly*, That you will be ſatisfy'd to accept of a Quarter's Payment, of whatever we ſhall agree on, always beforehand, for your Security, in taking a Perſon ſo altogether unknown to you into your Houſe. I will give you (continu'd ſhe, perceiving I look'd amaz'd) Time to conſider on what I have ſaid, and in a Day or two, will wait on you for an Anſwer. As ſhe ſpoke theſe Words, ſhe went haſtily into the Chair, leaving me in as great a Conſternation at her Behaviour, as ever I remember myſelf to have been in at any thing in my whole Life, *Belinda* could not here forbear interrupting her, by aſking a thouſand Queſtions as to her Dreſs, her Beauty, and whether ſhe obſerv'd any thing of that Melancholy in her Countenance the firſt time, which ſhe had ſince diſcover'd. To all which the Landlady reply'd, That the Surprize ſhe was in at that time, hinder'd her from taking much Notice either of her Garb or Perſon; but that, ſince her being in the Houſe, ſhe was always dreſs'd rich, but extremely careleſs, and would often go with only her Hair and a Night-gown for many Days together. But in ſpite (ſaid ſhe) of the little Care ſhe ſeems to take of herſelf, Heaven never form'd a Creature more exactly lovely; nor do I think it poſſible for the niceſt Eye to diſcover the leaſt Defect, either in her Face or Shape. What is ſhe (reſum'd *Belinda*) as to her Wit and Converſation? I have already told you (anſwer'd the other) that ſhe refuſes to let us know her Perfections that way, by never ſtirring from her Apartment, nor permitting any of us to come into it; but if we may form a Judgment of her Genius, by the Entertainment which alone ſhe ſeems to take Delight in, that of reading the beſt Authors, we muſt believe it to be very elegant: She has an admirable Collection of Books; and my Maid, who waits on

her, tells me, ſhe never goes in, without finding her engag'd in ſome one of them. Then you ventur'd (ſaid *Belinda*) to take her, without any further Knowledge? I conſider'd (reply'd ſhe) that there cou'd be no great hazard in it; and, beſides, there was ſomething ſo inexpreſſibly engaging in her Mien and Manner of Addreſs, that I believe it almoſt an Impoſſibility ſhe ſhould be refus'd any thing. This Account gave *Belinda* the greateſt Deſire imaginable to be acquainted with her, and ſhe never left ſoliciting the Landlady to uſe her Intereſt to procure it. The old Gentlewoman, who was extreamly good-humour'd, promiſed to do her endeavour; but ſaid withal, that ſhe was afraid it was a Work ſhe ſhould not be able to accompliſh. You muſt tell her (ſaid *Belinda*) and, perhaps, with more Truth than you imagine, that you have a Perſon in your Houſe, who juſtly may be term'd one of the moſt unfortunate on Earth;——that I am charm'd with her Manner of Life;——that I could like nothing ſo much as to partake ſuch a Retirement;——and, that if ſhe wou'd permit me ſometimes to mingle my Tears with hers, I wou'd be ſatisfy'd with the Opportunity of indulging my Grief, without any farther Intruſion on her Secrets, than ſhe ſhall give leave. This (anſwer'd the Landlady) if any Thing, will do.—And as you have ſo ingeniouſly contriv'd the Plot, it muſt be entirely owing to my Want of Ability in carrying it on, if it ſhou'd miſcarry: And (continu'd ſhe) I go about it with the more Courage, becauſe that reſerv'd, and, indeed, too grave Look (for ſo young and fine a Lady) which you always wear, will, if ſhe conſents to ſee you, give ſome Credit to my Words. You need not, indeed (reſum'd *Belinda*, with a deep Sigh) be under any Apprehenſions, that my Behaviour will be in the leaſt contradictory to whatever you ſhall tell her of my Diſpoſition to indulge a Melancholy, which I have but too much Reaſon for. You may talk after what manner you pleaſe (ſaid the other) but I am too well acquainted with your Circumſtances,

ſtances not to know that you can have no *real* Cauſes for that Penſiveneſs, which, to deal freely with you, very much obſcures the Luſtre of your Charms. I know not, indeed (continu'd ſhe, with a Smile) what *imaginary* ones your Fancy may ſuggeſt: Young People, too often, take Pleaſure, as it were, in finding out ſomething to afflict themſelves with:——— I am afraid you have ſeen ſome Gentleman too lovely for your Repoſe: and, perhaps, he may be (for Love is a blind Deity) of a Quality *above* your *Hopes*, or of a Degree *below* your *Diſcretion*, to make choice of;—or, 'tis poſſible, may have prov'd ungrateful;--or, may be already Married,—or engag'd, or elſe—She wou'd, doubtleſs, have run on with all the Circumſtances that can make a young Woman in Love unhappy, if *Belinda* (a little too nearly touch'd, putting on a more than ordinary Severity in her Countenance) had not interrupted her, by ſaying, Madam, whatever the Occaſion of my Melancholy may be, I am ſo much of the *Recluſe*'s Mind, as to reſolve to keep it ſecret. Pardon me (reſum'd the Landlady, perceiving ſhe was nettled) my Words were meant no otherwiſe than to divert; and to make what Reparation I can for the Inadvertency of them, will confeſs, that if a Perſon of *your* Age is too apt to ſeek Occaſions of tormenting herſelf, one of *mine* is liable to as great a Fault, that of talking too much of Affairs which are not any way her Buſineſs. Some Company happening to come in, broke off the Converſation. *Belinda* retir'd to her Chamber; and the Landlady remain'd with her Head full of Contrivance, by what means ſhe ſhou'd bring about the Performance of her Promiſe.

THE next Day an Opportunity offer'd very lucky for her Purpoſe: The *Recluſe* ſent for her to pay her ſome Money; and as ſoon as that Affair was diſpatch'd, ſhe began to labour the Succeſs of the other, and was ſo fortunate in her Negotiation, that as much averſe as ſhe found the *Recluſe* at firſt, the Aſſurances ſhe gave her that *Belinda*'s Deſire of her Society,

Society ſprung only from a Belief that there was a Sympathy in their Afflictions, at laſt prevail'd on her to receive a Viſit from her. Having obtain'd this Grant, the good old Gentlewoman, eager to acquit herſelf of the Promiſe ſhe had made, entreated that *Belinda* might have Leave to wait on her that Night; to which the *Recluſe*, having permitted her coming at all, eaſily conſented.

THE Meeting of theſe two Ladies was ſomething particular for Perſons of the ſame Sex; each found, at firſt Sight, ſo much to admire in the other, that it kept both from ſpeaking for ſome Moments. The *Recluſe* conſidered *Belinda*, as indeed ſhe is, one of the moſt lovely Perſons on Earth; and *Belinda* found the *Recluſe* ſo far beyond the *Landlady*'s Deſcription, ſomething ſo majeſtick, and withal ſo ſweet and attractive in her Air,—ſuch a Mixture of the moſt forceful Fire, and moſt enchanting Softneſs in her Eyes, that ſhe became wholly loſt in ſpeechleſs Wonder; till the *Recluſe* (who, tho' as young as *Belinda*, was Miſtreſs of a much greater Preſence of Mind) broke Silence in theſe Words:

IF, Madam (ſaid ſhe, with a Voice and Accent no leſs charming than her Perſon) you are enough in love with Miſery, to wiſh to be Partaker of it with me, I heartily can bid you welcome to this Scene of Woe: But if your Griefs are of a Nature that will admit Relief, the Society of a Wretch like me, will be far from adding to your Conſolation. To *forget* the Misfortunes I lament (reply'd *Belinda*) would be, perhaps a greater Ill than any I yet have known—'Tis my Deſire always to *remember* them; and nothing ſure can ſo well enable me to do it with Patience, as the Knowledge that ſo many excellent Qualities as you appear to be Miſtreſs of, cannot be exempted from Calamities. Alas! (reſum'd the *Recluſe*, burſting into Tears) 'tis the little Knowledge you have of me inclines you to ſo favourable an Opinion. Believe me, Madam (continued ſhe, weeping ſtill more) were you acquainted with the Hiſtory

of

of this Wretch, you ſee before you, you would allow, that as none like me has ever *ſuffer'd*, ſo alſo none ever has like me *deſerv'd* to ſuffer. I believe, Madam (anſwer'd *Belinda*) one of the greateſt Impoſſibilities you can attempt, is that of perſuading me, or, indeed, any body that ſees you, to that Opinion. Theſe little Civilities being over, they fell into a Converſation ſuitable to that Melancholy their Misfortunes had involv'd them in; and they agreed ſo perfectly in their Sentiments concerning the Inſtability of all human Happineſs,———the little Confidence there was to be put in the Proteſtations of Friendſhip,——and that the only way to attain true Content, was in an abſolute Retirement from the World, and a Diſregard of every thing in it; that when they parted (as *Belinda* thought it improper to make her firſt Viſit very long) it was with a mutual Satisfaction, and each began to conceive for the other a real Tenderneſs, which has ever ſince remain'd unſhaken.

THE next Day (being deſir'd to do ſo by the *Recluſe*) *Belinda* made her a ſecond Viſit; and after ſome Diſcourſe like what had paſs'd the Evening before, the Converſation turn'd, perhaps undeſignedly by either of them, on *Love*; but when once enter'd, neither ſeem'd to grow weary of the Subject; and both ſpoke in ſo feeling a Manner, that if a third Perſon had been Witneſs of what they ſaid, he need not have been very quick of Apprehenſion to diſcover what was the Source of both theſe Ladies Troubles. They ſat together till paſt Midnight; and when *Belinda* took her Leave, it was not without making an Appointment to paſs the next Evening as they had done this.

As ſoon as *Belinda* was alone, ſhe began to run over in her Mind, all the Particulars of the Converſation ſhe had with the *Recluſe*, and was now *confirm'd* in what ſhe before *imagin'd*, that *Love* had been the ſole Cauſe of her Retirement: She would have given almoſt one of her Eyes, to have been let into

into the Secret of the whole Affair; but durſt not attempt to aſk it, for fear of diſobliging her, if the *Recluſe*, who was little behind her in Curioſity, had not at the next Viſit, purpoſely given her an Opportunity.

I KNOW not, Madam (ſaid ſhe, ſoon after they were together) whether there be a Poſſibility for you to imagine from what Cauſe the Miſeries you ſee me in have proceeded; but I am half poſitive, that I can more than gueſs the Origin of that Melancholy which induces you to ſupport the Society of a Wretch like me.———I cannot doubt, Madam (reply'd *Belinda*, bluſhing, yet pleaſed ſhe had ſo favourable an Opportunity of ſpeaking her Mind without Offence) your Penetration in a much greater Matter; ſince I, who have but little Diſcernment, and leſs Experience, have been bold enough in my Imagination, to aſſure myſelf that whatever the *Effects* may be, the *Cauſe* of both our Sorrows is the ſame. I am ſo much of your Mind, (reſum'd the other) that I am willing to put it to the Tryal. Here (continu'd ſhe, taking Pens and Paper) do you write, and I will do the ſame, and by reading what each other have ſat down, both will avoid the Confuſion of ſpeaking firſt. Agreed (ſaid *Belinda*) and immediately did as the *Recluſe* deſir'd. On Exchange of the Papers, *Belinda* read in that which the *Recluſe* had writ, *Undone by* Love, *and the Ingratitude of faithleſs Man.* And the *Recluſe* found in that which the other had writ, theſe Words, *For ever loſt to Peace by* Love *and my own fond Belief.* As I expected! cry'd they out both together. And after a little Pauſe, not all the Ills (rejoin'd the *Recluſe*) which Fortune watches to oppreſs us with are half ſo ruinous, ſo deſtructive, as this one Paſſion! Nothing, indeed (reply'd *Belinda*, weeping) is to our Sex ſo fatal. O Love (continued ſhe) thou gilded Poiſon, which kills by ſlow Degrees, and makes each Moment of our Life a Death! Why, O why, do we ſuffer our fond Hearts to harbour there?———Why are we not like

like Man (reſum'd the *Recluſe*, bearing her Company in Tears) inconſtant, changing, and hunting after Pleaſure in every Shape?———Or, if our Sex, more pure, and more refin'd, diſdains a Happineſs ſo groſs, why have we not Strength of Reaſon too, to enable us to *ſcorn* what is no longer *worthy* our *Eſteem?* In theſe, and the like Exclamations, they paſt ſome Time; and had, doubtleſs, given a greater Looſe to the overboiling Paſſions of their Souls, if their mutual Curioſity to know each other's Adventures, had not oblig'd them to leave off.

THE *Recluſe* wou'd fain have perſuaded *Belinda* to relate her Story firſt; but that Lady excus'd herſelf in Terms ſo obliging, and full of Reſpect, that the other cou'd not preſs her any farther, and only ſaid, I ſhou'd hardly be prevail'd on to a Recital of thoſe Misfortunes which, indeed, have fallen on me but too juſtly, till by knowing yours I ſhou'd have Hope to find Excuſe: But, as I am confident no Woes were ever like mine, I have Good-nature enough to acquaint you with 'em firſt, to the End that the Knowledge of mine may make your own ſeem leſs, and enable you with more Eaſe to the Relation of them. *Belinda* anſwer'd her only with a Bow, and a little ſhaking of her Head, at once to thank her for her Civility, and ſhew that ſhe thought it impoſſible for any Affliction to extend that which ſhe endur'd: And the *Recluſe*, after having paid a Tribute of Sighs, which the Remembrance of her Misfortunes always exacted from her, began to ſatisfy her Companion's Impatience in theſe Words:

The Story of CLEOMIRA.

TO make you perfectly comprehend the Truth of my Affairs (ſaid ſhe) I muſt acquaint you of what Condition my *Parents* were: Though their Names I ſhall beg leave to conceal, leſt by declaring to any one that ſo deſervedly unhappy a Creature is their Child, I ſhou'd diſturb the ſacred Quiet of their Aſhes.

She

She could not ſpeak this without burſting into a Torrent of Tears, which, for ſome Moments, hindered her from proceeding: But as ſoon as ſhe had a little repell'd the Violence of her Grief, You muſt know (continued ſhe) that my Father was a younger Branch of a Family which boaſts a Place among the Prime of the *Nobility*; and my Mother was deſcended from Anceſtors whoſe noble Actions merited Titles, though they wore none, but that of being the beſt and moſt ancient of the Gentry. They had both been from their Infancy accuſtomed to a Court, and had Spirits far above their Circumſtances, which made them unable to endure the Thoughts either of a Retirement, or appearing in Publick with an Equipage any way inferior to what thoſe of the ſame Rank maintain'd. Thus was I, who was their only Child, bred up in all the Pomp and Pride of Quality; and great Part of what ſhould have been reſerved for my Fortune, ſpent in my Education, and laviſh'd on thoſe unneceſſary Ornaments and Expences which all young Girls, who are fond of making a Shew, affect. I was not much above Thirteen when my Father died: His Loſs was ſo real a Grief to my Mother, that for a long time ſhe remain'd inconſolable, nor did her former Gaiety ever return. Inſtead of entertaining any Thoughts of a ſecond Marriage, ſhe tranſplanted all the Tenderneſs ſhe had borne my Father on me; and the Conſideration how improbable it was for her to match me according to my Birth, or the Expectations I had been bred to (my Father being able to leave me no more than three thouſand Pounds) every Day increaſed her Affliction: Nor were theſe Reflections unaccompanied with Fears, that my Youth, and ſome Attractions which her Love made her fancy ſhe ſaw about me, might draw on Temptations to the Diſadvantage of my Reputation; ſhe therefore reſolv'd on the ſudden to quit the Court, as a Place too dangerous for a young Woman to continue in, who had not a Fortune ſufficient to entitle her

her to the honourable Affections of the *Great*, and too much Pride to liſten to the Sollicitations of the *inferior* Sort who frequented it. That the leſs Notice might be taken of the Change of her Humour, ſhe pretended an Indiſpoſition, and that the *London* Air did not agree with her; and in a ſhort Time took a Houſe about ſix Miles diſtant from it. This was like preſent Death to me: But all I cou'd ſay was of no effect; the more preſſing I appear'd to *ſtay*, the more ſhe thought it needful I ſhould *go*; and the paſſionate Fondneſs I expreſs'd for the Town Diverſions and Diſdain of a Country Life, confirm'd her, that it was abſolutely neceſſary at once to prevent the Dangers ſhe imagin'd threaten'd me, and repel the Growth of that Ambition which ſhe found had already taken too deep a Root in my youthful Heart. In fine, we went: And this ſo ſudden and diſagreeable an Alteration in my Manner of Living, gave me a Shock which I know not how to expreſs. My Mother, entirely throwing off the *fine Lady*, began to practiſe the meer *Country Gentlewoman*, and us'd her utmoſt Endeavours to make me do ſo too. She was continually telling me, that my Fortune, join'd with all ſhe cou'd be able to do for me, cou'd entitle me to no greater Hopes.—That it was time for me to learn to play the good Houſewife, and forget that there ever were ſuch Things as Balls, Plays, Maſquerades, or Aſſemblies. All this, which was really the Effect of her *Prudence*, I look'd upon as *Whimſy*; and the Reſtraint ſhe laid me under, of not viſiting, or being viſited by any Perſon, whom ſhe cou'd have the leaſt Apprehenſion of, I conſidered as an Affront to my Underſtanding. I am oblig'd (ſaid ſhe, my dear *Belinda*) to enter into theſe Particulars, becauſe this ſudden Change from all the Liberties in the World, to the moſt ſtrict Confinement, is all the Excuſe I can make for my ill Conduct. — But why (continu'd ſhe, after a Pauſe) ſhou'd I alledge that for my Vindication, which Time, perhaps, and Conſideration, might have made eaſy to me, if a more fatal Enemy

to

to my *Repoſe*, as well as my *Intereſt*, my *Honour*, and my *Virtue*, had not made it more hateful to me. Here was her Speech a ſecond Time interrupted by her tempeſtuous Grief; and *Belinda* was forc'd to make uſe of all the Arguments ſhe was Miſtreſs of, to perſuade her to Moderation.

At laſt, getting leave to reſume her Diſcourſe, One Day (ſaid ſhe) one fatal Day,—wou'd to God it had been the laſt of my *Life*, as it was of my *Repoſe*, two Ladies came to viſit my Mother; and ſpeaking of a magnificent Ball that Night at Court, told her they were come on purpoſe to entreat her to permit me to accompany them. By the Account I have given, you may judge how little Probability there was ſhe ſhou'd conſent; but whether ſhe was really overcome by their *Reaſons*, or only yielded to their *Perſuaſions*, being Perſons ſhe very much eſteem'd, I know not: But when I leaſt expected it, ſhe order'd me to make myſelf ready to wait on them. Never was any Priſoner, who long had languiſh'd in a Dungeon, more rejoic'd to ſee the open Air, than I to find myſelf once more in Court, where every body welcom'd me, every body careſs'd me, and, indeed, I believe, ſome of them with a good deal of Sincerity: For not being of a Quality *great* enough to create *Envy*, nor ſo *mean* as to beget *Contempt*, and tolerably well humour'd; I am ſenſible there were many whoſe kind Wiſhes I heartily poſſeſs'd. I had my Admirers too; at leaſt, there were ſeveral young Sparks, and thoſe not of the loweſt Rank, who took pleaſure in making me believe ſo. Not that my Heart was any way affected with what they ſaid, though I had Vanity enough to encourage it: *Love* was a Paſſion I had ſo little Notion of, that I conſider'd it no more than as a Fiction, and only dreſs'd up by the Poets in ſuch Variety of Shapes, to make the Amuſement more entertaining. But this, alas! was the unlucky Hour in which I was to be convinc'd of the real Being of that Power I ſo ſlightly had regarded; and ſoon learn'd to pity, by my *own*, thoſe

thoſe Pains which, with an unregarding Ear, I often had heard *others* mourn.

ABOUT the middle of the Ball, as I was Dancing with a young Nobleman, who had done me the Honour to take me out, I ſaw on a ſudden, the Eyes of the whole Company turn'd towards the Door; but, being too buſily engag'd in what I was about, had not Time to conſider what the Meaning might be, till having ended my Dance, and it being my turn to take a Partner, a Lady of my Acquaintance whiſper'd me, and ſaid, There's the fine young Lord—(I will not call him by any other Name than that of *Lyſander*.) He is lately (continued my Friend) come from his Travels, and but this Moment enter'd; it will be an envy'd Gallantry if you lead him out. While ſhe was ſpeaking, I directed my Eyes where I perceiv'd ſhe look'd, and ſaw a Form which appear'd more than *Man*, and nothing inferior to thoſe Idea's we conceive of *Angels*: His Air! his Shape! his Face! were more than human!——Myriads of light'ning Glories darted from his Eyes, as he caſt them round the Room, yet temper'd with ſuch a ſtreaming Sweetneſs, ſuch a deſcending Softneſs, as ſeem'd to *entreat* the Admiration he *commanded!* A thouſand times have I attempted ſince to *ſpeak* what 'twas I *felt* at this firſt fatal Interview; but *Words* could never do juſtice to the Wonders of his *Charms*, or half deſcribe the *Effect* they wrought on me: Oh! had his *Soul* been worthy of that lovely, that tranſporting *Outſide*, I ſhould have been too bleſt, been *happy* to as ſuperlative a Degree, as now I am *curs'd* and wretched. But not to tire you with unavailing *Wiſhes*, or as fruitleſs *Exclamations*, I *lov'd*!—was plung'd in a wild Sea of Paſſion, before I had Time to *know*, or ſtem the Danger! I had ſo many diſorder'd Motions in my *Heart*, that I am amaz'd my *Feet* kept any juſt Meaſure with the Muſick; or that, ſo little uſed as I had ever been to diſguiſe my Thoughts, my *Eyes* did not betray the Confuſion of my *Soul*, and make viſible to the whole Company what

what I was not yet acquainted with myſelf: But whether the great Concourſe of much finer Ladies who were there, hinder'd me from being much regarded, or thoſe Changes which, I am very ſure, appeared in my Countenance, were only taken for the Effects of Baſhfulneſs in dancing with a Perſon who was altogether a Stranger, I cannot tell; but I ſcap'd that Raillery, which I muſt have expected to have met with, if any body had been ſenſible of the true State of my Condition. When I had done dancing, I mingled with thoſe Ladies who came with me, and ſome others of my Acquaintance: *Lyſander* ſoon join'd us, and enter'd into a Converſation, which ſhew'd his Wit was, if poſſible, ſuperior to his Beauty: He was perfectly well bred, obliging and gallant, and had ſomething of I know not what peculiarly graceful and enchanting in his Voice and Manner of Addreſs; and what added to his other Engagements, at leaſt *endear'd* them to my (already doting) Heart, was, that though he ſaid nothing in particular to me at that time, yet I could eaſily diſcern he aim'd at pleaſing only me. But he behav'd himſelf not in ſo general a Manner the whole Night: A little after, perceiving I was ſeparated a good Diſtance from the Perſons I had been with, he came up to me, and making a low Bow, Madam (ſaid he) how fortunate am I, who, after having been in many Courts where I have ſeen Ladies who juſtly may be called beautiful, and ſince my Return home have met with nothing that could bring me into good Humour with my native Country, have *now* the Bleſſing of beholding a Face, which not only ſums up all the different Lovelineſſes of *other* Charmers, but has alſo an immenſely divine Treaſure of its *own!*——*Others* may move the Heart by ſlow Degrees, and with ſome one Perfection captivate the *Senſe*; but *you* have Graces which ſtrike the very *Soul*, and at firſt Sight ſubdue each Faculty! Bluſh not, fair Excellence! (continued he, finding I was ſilent, as indeed I had no Power to ſpeak) I tell you

but

but the Senſe of all Mankind;——but what Millions of Tongues are full of, and what your happy Glaſs, as often as you look in it, informs you. If, my Lord (reply'd I, recollecting myſelf as well as I was able) there were a Poſſibility of being unacquainted with my own Defects, ſo good-natured a Compliment might give me Graces which before I wanted: But as I have the Misfortune of knowing myſelf but too well, all the Advantage I can gain by it, is the Honour of being in the Company of a Perſon whoſe Wit can find ſomething to praiſe in thoſe the leaſt Praiſe-worthy. O moſt Angelick (reſum'd he, tenderly preſſing my unreſiſting Hand) moſt adorable of your Sex! rob not the brighteſt Temple of the Deity, your divine Self, of your juſt Due.——— If (but that's impoſſible) you can diſtruſt the Force of your too potent Charms, the Effects they have on *me* will quickly tell you what they are:—Could thoſe inſpiring Eyes but look into my Soul, they would perceive their Power.——Pardon this Declaration: A vulgar Paſſion, and for a vulgar Object, may wait on the dull Formalities of *Decorum*; but what I feel for *you*, burſts out and blazes too fierce to be conceal'd.———It is not to be expreſs'd,——It is not to be imagined, how he look'd while he was ſpeaking theſe Words, and much leſs in what manner I behaved at hearing them: Surprize, and Joy, and Hope, and Fear, and Shame, at once aſſaulted me, and hurried my wild Spirits with ſuch Vehemence, that had I anſwer'd at all, it muſt have been ſomething ſtrangely incoherent; but, happily for me, ſome Company came that Inſtant to the Place where we were ſtanding, and deliver'd me from the greateſt Perplexity I could be in. I did not, however, recover myſelf the whole time of my being there; yet, ſo much was I infatuated, ſo loſt to all Thought of Reaſon or Diſcretion, that whenever he approach'd me, I had not Courage to avoid him, as I might eaſily have done, without being taken notice of. It is ſure, he took all Opportunities of entertaining me

in

in the Manner he had begun, and without doubt, as he has ſince own'd to me, he ſaw enough in my Eyes to make him know the Pleaſure I took in hearing him ſpeak, far exceeded my Confuſion at what he ſaid.

It was almoſt Morning when the Ball broke up; and there being no Poſſibility of my going home till next Day I paſs'd that Time at the Lady's Houſe who brought me out: But, though the Fatigue and Hurry of the Night wou'd at another Seaſon have made me glad of Reſt, I had *now* enough to keep me waking: *Lyſander*'s Charms, his Beauty, his Wit, the Declaration he had made me, and the Manner in which I had received it, gave me ſufficient Matter of Reflection: I could not think I had liſten'd to any Proteſtations of *Love*, from a Man I had never ſeen before, without an inexpreſſible Shock to my Modeſty; but theſe Conſiderations ſoon gave place to others even more deſtructive to my Peace. *Lyſander* was too lovely, and appear'd too deſerving, for me to repent, for any long time, the Complaiſance I had ſhew'd him; and my greateſt Trouble was the Fear that I ſhould never ſee him more. I reſolv'd to ſay nothing to my Mother of what had paſs'd, believing with Reaſon enough, that ſhe would not only condemn me for Miſmanagement, but alſo take ſuch Meaſures as ſhould for ever deprive me of the Sight of him: *Love* taught me a Cunning which before I was a Stranger to; and though I burn'd with Deſire to be talking ſomething of my ador'd *Lyſander*, and vent ſome Part of the Overflowings of my raviſh'd Soul, yet I ſo well diſſembled, that at my return home, I never mention'd the leaſt Syllable which could give ſuſpicion; and contented myſelf, as well as I was able with the Belief that *Lyſander* (who, I found by his calling me by my Name had enquired who I was) would find ſome Means to ſend to me. Nor did that Hope deceive me: The very next Day, happening to be at a Window, I perceiv'd a Fellow walking backwards and forwards

wards before our Houſe: It preſently came into my Head, that there was a Probability he might be a Meſſenger from *Lyſander*. I obſerved his Motions a good while, and finding he ſtill lurk'd about, with his Eyes continually fix'd on our Door, I made a Pretence to go down; and ſtanding there a little, the Man drew nearer, but with a Circumſpection which confirm'd me my Conjectures were true. No body being within hearing, I called to him, and aſked him if he wanted any thing. Madam, (anſwered he ſoftly, and pulling a Letter out of his Pocket) by the Deſcription which was given me, I believe *this* is deſigned to you. It is, it is (cried I, as ſoon as I ſaw the Superſcription) and immediately ran in, too much tranſported to ſay any more. I got into an Arbor in the Garden, to peruſe the dear Contents, which I very well remember, and are too deeply engraven in my Mind, ever to be forgotten.

To the divine CLEOMIRA.

IF the moſt adorable Cleomira *wanted any Proof of the Dominion of her Charms, beſides the juſt Title they have to reign over the Souls of all Mankind, this had come to convince her of a Truth, which Yeſterday ſhe ſeem'd ſo cruelly to doubt. But you are too Divine to be ignorant of your Attributes; and, if there is any Thing in you, which is not of a Piece with Heaven, it is that you are not ſufficiently ſtored with Mercy to look favourably on a Man who has no other Merit than his Zeal. It is with an inconceivable Terror I look back on that Declaration, which the Force of the moſt violent Paſſion that ever was, obliged me to make, in ſo impolite and unprepared a Manner; and tremble when I conſider how much Reaſon you have to condemn the Preſumption of this. But, if as many Years of humble faithful Services as Fate has allotted for my Life, may purchaſe a Pardon for the Sin of my Temerity, I devote them*

them intirely to you,—Henceforth rule my every Word and Action,—I had almoſt ſaid my every Wiſh: But, oh! that is not in your Power, vaſt as it is! for could you command me to ceaſe burning with impatient Deſires to obtain the Bleſſing of pleaſing you, I freely own, I could not,—nay, I would not, in that, *obey you:—In ſpite even of yourſelf, I muſt for ever* love, *—for ever* worſhip *you!—Permit me then to owe to* your Bounty, *what elſe my* own Obſtinacy *will give me, the Title of the*

Moſt excellent *Cleomira*'s

Trueſt and Everlaſting Votary,

LYSANDER.

THERE was a *Poſtſcript* (continued the *Recluſe*) in which he preſs'd very ſtrenuouſly for an Anſwer; the Words of which I do not very well remember: And, indeed, it is needleſs to have troubled you with this, or many others of the like Nature; but as there are ſome of his Letters, which, in the Courſe of my Story, I ſhall be obliged to repeat, I thought it proper to let you ſee the mighty Difference between *Hoping* and *Poſſeſſing*; to what an elevated Height the Wings of Fancy ſoar, while in Purſuit; and how low, how faint, and drooping is their Flight, when there is nothing farther to be obtained? I will not pretend to tell you what my Tranſports were while I was reading; if, as you confeſs, you really know the Power of Love, *your own* Heart will make you comprehend what it was *mine* felt, much more than any Words could do. I was almoſt diſtracted for fear the Meſſenger ſhould be gone, and I have no Opportunity to ſend an Anſwer: But he was better inſtructed by his Maſter; and when I open'd the Door, he preſently ſtarted out from behind a great Tree that grew before the Houſe. I made a Sign to him that he ſhould ſtay, and went to my Chamber to write: I durſt not allow time for Thought,

Thought, leſt any Interruption ſhould happen; and only following the Dictates of my inconſiderate and tranſported Paſſion, returned an Anſwer in theſe Words:

To the Noble LYSANDER.

IF Cleomira *were half ſo worthy Adoration as* Lyſander *truly is, ſhe might without any Difficulty be brought to believe all you ſay to her: but, as I am ſenſible I have no other Graces than thoſe your Fancy is pleas'd to beſtow on me, you cannot blame me, if I am a little diffident of the Continuance of a Paſſion ſo weakly grounded. —I ſhall not, however, deſire you to deſiſt giving me any farther Teſtimonies of it; becauſe, as you ſay, while you are poſſeſs'd of it, Entreaties of that kind would be altogether unavailing. I think myſelf extremely obliged to you for the Caution with which your Letter was delivered; and if you favour me with any more, hope you will make uſe of the ſame, which will be of the greateſt Conſequence to the Peace of*

CLEOMIRA.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Violence of my Paſſion, there were ſome Intervals in which I endured ſevere Upbraidings from my Modeſty, for engaging thus precipitately in a Love-Affair; but they laſted not long, and at every Return grew weaker than before: *Lyſander*'s Idea would ſuffer nothing but itſelf to have any Prevalence in my Soul; and the Glory, methought, of appearing amiable in his Eyes, was more Happineſs than all the World beſides could give.

THE next Morning, almoſt the firſt Perſon I ſaw, was the Meſſenger again, walking as he had done the Day before: I made no doubt but he had another *Billet* for me, and the firſt Moment I had an Opportunity, went down to receive it. I was not deceiv'd;

for as ſoon as I had opened the Door, he ſlipp'd a Paper into my Hand, and retired to his Covert quick as Lightning. The Words of this were;

To my ador'd CLEOMIRA.

HOW much was I miſtaken while I believ'd it impoſſible there was a Charm more touching than your Wit *and* Beauty: *Your* Goodneſs *raviſhes beyond both!——The Brightneſs of your Eyes inflame the Heart;——the Harmony of your Voice enchants the Ear;——but this divine Sweetneſs of your Nature diffuſes Heaven, and gives Raptures which* Angels *only, and the happier* Man *whom* Cleomira *favours, can be bleſs'd with!——Say, with what Words, thou wonderous Abſtract of Perfection! thou loveliеſt,——wiſeſt,——beſt of all created Beings! ſhall I repay a Condeſcenſion ſo unhoped,——unmerited! To be permitted to adore you, is Extaſy too great to bear in Silenee!——O give my impetuous Tranſports leave to vent themſelves!——let me beneath your Feet declare the mighty Senſe I have of ſo unvalued an Obligation!——let, on that happy Earth you tread on, my humble* Body *avow the lower Proſtration of my devoted* Soul, *and never riſe, till by ſome Arguments forcible as my Paſſion, I have convinc'd you with how much Truth, Purity, and everlaſting Zeal, I am your Slave! I have not been ſo ſparing of my Enquiries, as not to know it will be almoſt impoſſible to obtain the Bleſſing I entreat at your Houſe; but if you can think of any* other, *where with Convenience I may be favour'd, let the ſame unequalled Excellence of Diſpoſition, which has already done ſuch Miracles for me, incline you to let me know it by the Bearer: As alſo if you will feaſt my longing Eyes with a tranſient View from your Window, as I paſs by to-morrow Morning on Horſeback. Tho' your* Idea *has never been abſent from my* Soul, *ſince the firſt Moment I beheld you, yet my impatient* Senſe *reproaches me that I have liv'd theſe two long Days; without endeavouring at leaſt a greater Proportion of*

Feli-

Felicity, and teſtifying by all the Ways I am able, how much I am the never-too-much deify'd Cleomira's

Eternally Devoted

and moſt Paſſionate

LYSANDER

ANY body but *me*, would have been too much alarmed at the reading theſe Lines, to have return'd any Anſwer, unleſs it were ſuch a one as ſhould have entirely taken away thoſe Hopes my former Complaiſance had inſpired. The Boldneſs of deſiring me to appoint a Meeting was ſo great, as all the fine Things he ſaid to me could not attone for; and was ſufficient to have taught me, how dangerous it was to make any Condeſcenſions of this kind to a Man I had ſo little Knowledge of: To *another*, I ſay, this might have been a timely Warning; but, alas! I was ſo blinded with my Paſſion, that I could think of nothing but which way I ſhould gratify it; and without any Struggles from that Baſhfulneſs which till now had never forſook me, writ him a Reply in this manner.

To the worthy LYSANDER.

THE Gratitude you expreſs for that, perhaps, too great Compliance you have found in me, is infinitely obliging: for I would much rather you ſhould impute it to any thing, than to that Vanity, *which too often influences a Woman of my Age, to encourage Addreſſes her* Heart *is no way affected with; and, tho' it may appear too free a Declaration, I am ſo little acquainted with diſguiſing the Truth, that I cannot forbear telling you, it is to your Merits alone you are indebted for the Liberty of a Correſpondence, which you are pleas'd to think agreeable. Your Information, that it is impoſſible for me to receive the honour you would do me at our Houſe, has not deceived you; and I muſt alſo let you*

know, I am too ſtrictly confined to promiſe it at any other. I muſt therefore leave it intirely to Fortune, to procure me any farther Pleaſure in your Converſation than what your Letters *afford: But in the mean time, ſhall not fail being at the Window that overlooks the Road, in the Hope of ſeeing a Perſon whoſe Regard ſhall always be moſt valuable to*

CLEOMIRA.

WHEN I had ſent this away, I feigned myſelf a little indiſpoſed, to avoid the neceſſity of Talking; for Speech was now become a Pain, ſince I durſt not employ it in the Praiſe of my adored *Lyſander*. I paſſed the whole Day, and good part of the Night, in contemplating the Happineſs I ſhould enjoy next Morning; and it could be called ſcarce Dawn when I got up, and took my Poſt at the appointed Window, whence I believe it would have been impoſſible for any Thing to have removed me. My Mother was no ſooner out of Bed than ſhe enquired after my Health; her Tenderneſs making her doubt the Diſorder I complained of was increaſed, becauſe I had not been in her Chamber, as it was my Cuſtom every Morning, to intreat her Bleſſing: And being told where I was, came in to me, not a little ſurpriſed to find me in a Room, which, by reaſon of the great Duſt of the Highway, was very ſeldom made uſe of, and the leaſt pleaſant of any in the Houſe. She did not fail to ask the Cauſe of my being there; and I told her, That not being very well, I hoped ſome Benefit from the Air, which I thought blew freſher on that ſide of the Houſe, than on the other. She could have no Suſpicion of the Truth, and this Excuſe paſs'd well enough. Breakfaſt being ready, ſhe ſent a Servant to call me; but I not being prevailed on to come, ſhe ordered it ſhould be brought where I was. This vexed me to the Heart; for I was not willing that any body, much leſs that ſhe ſhould be a Witneſs of this Interview, tho' at ſuch a Diſtance, with *Lyſander*. I knew ſhe had diſcerning Eyes;

and

and fear'd ſhe might diſcover more than I wiſh'd ſhe ſhou'd, in one or both of our Faces. I refus'd to drink Tea, ſcarce ſpoke, or if I did, it was ſo peeviſhly and unmannerly, that I am amaz'd ſhe did not leave me in a Rage to indulge my ill Humour; But ſhe, taking my Behaviour for the Effect of Vapours continued to ſooth me by a thouſand endearing Expreſſions, which were wholly loſt upon me: I had no Eyes, no Ears, no Heart open for any thing but *Lyſander*. At length he came, and with a Mien and Air, ſo ſoft, ſo ſweet, ſo graceful, that Painters might have copy'd an *Adonis* from him, fit, indeed, to charm the Queen of Beauty. He was dreſs'd in a ſtrait Jockey-Coat of Green Velvet richly embroider'd at the Seams with Silver; the Buttons were *Brilliants*, neatly ſet in Faſhion of Roſes; his Hair, which is as black as Jet, was ty'd with a green Ribband, but not ſo ſtraitly but that a thouſand little Ringlets ſtray'd o'er his lovely Cheeks and wanton'd in the Air; a crimſon Feather in his Hat, ſet off to vaſt Advantage the dazzling Whiteneſs of his Skin. In fine, he was all over Charms!—all over glorious! and I believe it impoſſible for the moſt Inſenſible to have beheld him without adoring him!—What then became of me?—O God! how fruitleſs wou'd any Endeavours be to repreſent what 'twas I felt! Tranſported!——Raviſh'd!——I wonder the violent Emotions of my *Soul* did not bear my *Body* out of the Window!———O wou'd it had been ſo, that Love and Life might then have had an End, and ſcap'd the Woes which both have ſince endur'd! The great Trampling which the Horſes made (for he had four Servants in rich Liveries, and gallantly mounted, attending him) oblig'd my Mother to riſe from her Chair, to ſee what it was that occaſion'd it. She came to the Window the Moment that *Lyſander* was making me a profound Reverence. I know not how I return'd it; but, doubtleſs, with a Confuſion, ſuitable to what I felt within, and which was but too viſible to my Mother's Obſervation: For after he

was paſs'd by, and my Eyes were purſuing him as far as I was able, ſhe rouzed me from the enchanting Dream I had been in, by pulling me by the Sleeve from the Window, and looking earneſtly in my Face, as tho' ſhe wou'd penetrate into my Soul, bad me tell her who that Gentleman was. I know not, Madam (anſwered I, with a Voice which ſufficiently diſcovered the Inſincerity of my Words.) I am afraid (ſaid ſhe, changing her Countenance to more Severity than ever I had ſeen her wear) you know him but too well: Acquaint me therefore this Moment with the Truth; where, when, and how often you have ſeen him. I cou'd not immediately gather Courage to make any Reply to this Command; and, when I aſſured her, as I truly might, that I had never ſeen him, but at the *Ball*; ſhe was ſo far from giving Credit to what I ſaid, that ſhe flew into the greateſt Paſſion I had ever ſeen her in: And after ſhe had a little vented it in ſome Exclamations on the Follies of Love, and Diſobedience to Parents, left me alone to meditate on her Words.

THIS was a dreadful Allay to the Pleaſure I had lately enjoy'd: I perceiv'd the Secret I had taken ſo much pains, and fancy'd myſelf ſo artful in concealing, was, by my own Inadvertency, diſcover'd.—I cou'd not reflect on the Indignation of a Mother, who, bating the Reſtraint ſhe laid me under, I had reaſon to think a moſt affectionate one, without a Concern very near *Remorſe*, for doing any thing to occaſion it. But when I reflected on the Injuſtice ſhe did me (for ſo my *Love* taught me to conſider it) in condemning my Admiration of a Perſon ſo every way deſerving as *Lyſander* appear'd to be, I regretted nothing but the Power ſhe had over me, leſt ſhe ſhould exert it yet more, and deprive me of any future Means of ſeeing him. I had been happy never to have been more deceiv'd than I was in my Conjecture, that ſhe wou'd take all poſſible Precaution to prevent my having any Converſation with a Perſon whom ſhe ſo juſtly believed dangerous.

I HAD

I HAD not paſt many Hours in contemplating the Misfortunes I fancied myſelf in, before an old Woman (formerly my Governeſs, and now a ſort of Overſeer in the Family) came into the Room, and took upon her to reprove me, in Terms I could not well ſupport. On my giving her ſome tart Replies, ſhe told me, that ſhe had Orders from my Mother to confine me to my Chamber, till I had learned the Leſſon of Humiliation. I was forced to obey; and, indeed, was well enough contented to be any where, to avoid the hearing of ſuch Sermons: All that I thought an Affliction was, that it would be impoſſible for me to *receive* or *anſwer* any Letters from *Lyſander*; and, it was only on this account that I paſſed three Days of my Confinement in mortal Inquietudes: On the fourth, I ſaw the *Mercury* to my *Jove*, mounted on a little Heap of Rubbiſh that the Gardener had thrown out, and peeping over the Wall. The poor Fellow, as I ſince underſtood, had been every one of thoſe Days watching about the Houſe; but not being able to get a Sight of me, either at the Door, or Windows, he at laſt came round that way. The Appearance of this Man made me almoſt mad; till caſting in my Mind, if there were not a Poſſibility of giving him notice of my Condition, Invention furniſhed me with this: I opened the Window, and thruſting myſelf out as far as I could, made a Sign to him that he ſhould tarry a little where he was; then taking a Piece of Paper, writ it in theſe Words:

I Know who you come from; and therefore gueſs your Buſineſs.— Let your Lord know I am in the ſtricteſt Confinement imaginable on his Account, — I fear it will be impoſſible for me to continue the Happineſs of a Correſpondence with him. It will be to no Purpoſe for you to ſtay, or return any more on the Deſign you are ſent on; but if you are taken notice of, may occaſion worſe Uſage, if poſſible, then what I now endure.

CLEOMIRA.

I PULLED a Lead out of the Sleeve of my Gown, and wrapping it up in this Paper, to give it Weight, made a ſhift to hurl it to the Place where he could reach it. He took a Letter out of his Pocket, and held up to ſhew me, making ſeveral Motions; by which I underſtood he was charged to give it me; but by ſhaking my Head, aud putting my Handkerchief to my Eyes, I teſtified the Impoſſibility of his Attempt, and Part of the Concern I was in. I ſay, but Part; for after he was gone, and I began to reflect, that indeed I never ſhould be able to ſee *Lyſander* more, no Tongue can expreſs the Emotions of my Soul. For many Days I did nothing but weep, and that in ſo violent a manner, that the Servants, whom my Mother ſent in to wait on me, apprehended I ſhould fall into Fits. This, when it was told her, gave ſo conſiderable an Alarm to her Tenderneſs, that it half diſſipated her Anger; and, when I leaſt expected it, ſhe ordered I ſhould come down into the Parlour; and receiving me with her uſual Affability, You have ſuffer'd enough (ſaid ſhe) for the Imprudence of contracting an Acquaintance without my Approbation; but as I ſhould forget it, at leaſt ſo far as never to reproach you with it, ſo I wou'd have you remember it enough to make you avoid, for the Future, any Faults of the like Nature. And, to convince me that there is nothing farther between you and this Gentleman, than what you would have me believe, you muſt reſume that Chearfulneſs which is becoming your Youth, and the little Cauſe you yet have met with to be otherwiſe. My Heart was too full to ſuffer me to make any other Reply to theſe Words than a low Curteſy; but when I had gather'd Courage enough to ſpeak, I endeavour'd to aſſure her, that my Melancholy proceeded from no other Cauſe, than being on a ſudden depriv'd of all thoſe Diverſions I had ever been accuſtom'd to; but that, ſince it was her Pleaſure, I would uſe my utmoſt Efforts to make it eaſy to me. She ſeem'd ſatisfy'd with what I ſaid; and, perhaps, believing ſhe had been a little

little too ſevere, from that time took me abroad with her wherever ſhe went: She carried me to viſit ſeveral Relations, and a great many Acquaintance, whoſe Society I formerly took delight in: But alas! this *now* could afford no Comfort to my bleeding Heart; it rather *encreaſed* than *diminiſhed* the Anguiſh of my ſecret Diſcontent; and ſince I could not ſee *Lyſander*, I could have been better pleaſed to have ſeen no body. There was no Poſſibility of conveying a Letter to him; I knew not where to direct; or if I had, notwithſtanding the Privileges my Mother now allowed me, ſhe ſcarce ever truſted me out of her Sight. Thus, for two Months, did I languiſh out my Nights in fruitleſs Wiſhes, and my Days in the moſt tormenting (of all) Employments, that of being obliged to wear a ſeeming Gaiety, when all my Soul was full of Horror and Diſtraction. In this Time a new Family came into the Neighbourhood; they ſoon made an Acquaintance with ours; and my Mother was ſo well pleaſed with the good Breeding and Gravity of the Maſter and Miſtreſs of it, that ſhe entered into an Intimacy with them much ſooner than was her Cuſtom to do with any body. They viſited frequently at our Houſe; and my Mother always made me accompany her to return them, though much againſt my Inclination; for, as I have already told you, my own Thoughts, unquiet as they were, gave me more Satisfaction than any Company but *Lyſander*'s could beſtow. Both the Man and the Woman ſeemed wonderfully charmed with me; took all Occaſions of complimenting me; and Mrs. *Marvir* (for that was the Name they were called by) would often endeavour to engage me in particular Converſation; which I, as carefully as I could, without being rude, avoided: Till one Day, ſhe began a little kind of Raillery on my affecting a Demureneſs in my Behaviour, which (ſhe ſaid) ſhe was ſure was not in my Nature. My Mother, who was willing to take all Opportunities of perſuading me to Chearfulneſs, join'd with her in this Aſſertion; and be-

tween them both I was pretty much put to it (ſo inwardly perplexed as I was) to make any Defence; which, by the Aukwardneſs of it, diſcover'd that I had, indeed, ſomething at my Heart which clouded the Gaiety of my Looks. I am afraid (ſaid Mrs. *Marvir* to my Mother) that your Daughter is in love: I warrant, if we ſhould ſearch her Chamber, we ſhould find a Number of amorous Books, and Epiſtles of the ſame Nature. I never had that Curioſity (reply'd my Mother) but I hope ſhe would receive none of the latter without my Knowledge; and I have taken care to inſtil ſuch Principles in her Mind, as will not let her be over-fond of the other. Will you give me leave to ſearch? (reſum'd ſhe, laughing). Yes, with all my Heart (anſwer'd I, glad to put an End to this Diſcourſe). I waited on her up Stairs; where, after ſhe had a little look'd about her, and praiſed the Pleaſantneſs of the Chamber, having a full Proſpect of the Garden, I told you (ſaid ſhe) that I ſhould find ſomething here more tender than you would have the World be ſenſible of. I dare ſwear (continued ſhe, taking a Letter from my Toilet, and giving it to me) the Contents of this may juſtly be called amorous. I had no ſooner caſt my Eyes on the Direction, than I knew the Hand to be *Lyſander*'s: The Conſternation I was in may be more eaſily imagined than expreſs'd: I had not Power to break the Seal, but continued looking ſometimes on her, ſometimes on the Table, and ſometimes on the Letter, as wondring by what means it had been convey'd there. Ceaſe your Surpriſe (reſumed ſhe) It was no other who laid the Letter on your Toilet than ſhe who took it off, and deliver'd it to your Hand, and ſhe who you need make no Scruple to confide in, ſince your *Lyſander*, your adoring, dying *Lyſander*, has thought me worthy of the Truſt of bearing you his Soul, his Vows, and everlaſting Faith. I will make ſome Excuſe (continu'd ſhe) for leaving you above, that you may have time both to read this and return an Anſwer, which I have engag'd to bring

bring him. I cou'd not get leave from my Aſtoniſhment to make any Reply to what ſhe ſaid; but when ſhe was gone, had my Senſes enough about me to lock the Door, and then fed my impatient and tranſported Wiſhes with theſe Lines.

To my Soul's only Treaſure, the Adorable CLEOMIRA.

HOW eaſily might be ſpar'd the Stings,— the Scorpions,— the never-dying Fires, and all the fancy'd Tortures which Prieſts invent to ride the frighted World, if any of thoſe Soul-enſlavers knew what it was to love like me! Abſence from Cleomira *is a Hell which all their labour'd Policy wants Skill to paint!--Within my burning Breaſt ten thouſand* real *Furies rage, and tear me with Variety of Anguiſh! Mad with Deſire, and wing'd with daring Hopes, ſometimes I cou'd tear down the envious Walls, and baffle all Impediments which hold you from me!--ſometimes, deſpairing, chill'd with deadly Horror, I fancy you regardleſs of my Woe, and eaſy under this Reſtraint!—one Moment imagine I ſee a favour'd Rival baſk in your Smiles, gaze on your Eyes in happy tranquil Pleaſure, and kiſs that Hand, which, but to touch, I wou'd forego my Life!-The next, diſtracted, think I behold you dragg'd by a cruel Mother to ſome deteſted Choice your Soul abhors! Then ſoften into more than female Tenderneſs, and weep for you and for myſelf!--O* Cleomira*! all the Names of Miſery, of Woe, of Anguiſh inſupportable, are poor to what, indeed, my Soul endures for you!--My Paſſion, and my Pains, are, like your Charms,* unutterable*! and only can be felt!---This Age of Abſence has been ſpent in nothing but Contrivances to ſhorten it, till theſe good People whoſe Fidelity you may rely on, were ſo fortunate to get into your Acquaintance,——O then, theu deareſt, brighteſt, lovelieſt of thy Sex! indulge the fond Deſign, and let them not be leſs regarded by you, now you know they are the Inſtruments by which you muſt receive the Teſtimonies of a Paſſion too ſublime to be*

inſpir'd by any but your divine Self; and which can be felt, in ſo high a Degree, by none but

Your eternally Devoted

LYSANDER.

I NEED not tell you the Raptures of my overjoy'd Soul at reading this Letter: My Anſwer to it will ſufficiently inform you, that I had no Conſideration but of the Extaſy it produc'd.

To the moſt Excellent LYSANDER.

YOU paint the Woes of Love in ſo extravagant a manner, that one had need be more than ordinarily ſenſible of that Paſſion, to be able to give any credit to a Deſcription ſo far beyond what is commonly conceiv'd of it. I am afraid Lyſander *is too well acquainted with his Perfections not to know the Effects they muſt produce, and but feigns to* feel *what he alone is capable of* inſpiring: *Were I really poſſeſs'd of as many Charms as your all-powerful Wit wou'd dreſs me up in, you have a thouſand Opportunities of diverting your Thoughts; Buſineſs,—Variety of Objects,—and gay Converſation, make your Hours ſlide away in vaſtly different Entertainments:--while I, of much the ſofter Sex, and conſequently ſuſceptible of a deeper Impreſſion, have nothing to do but to indulge a Paſſion, which in the Beginning ſeems delectable.—The* Dawn, *indeed, promiſes ten thouſand future Joys;—what the* Meridian *will be, is wholly in your Faith and Honour to be prov'd.——But, I have ſo implicite a Dependance on both, that I will make no ſcruple to confeſs the Tranſport of hearing from you again, is more than Recompence for all thoſe Inquietudes you have ſo perfectly repreſented in yours, and which, I hope, will be no more the Portion of*

Your CLEOMIRA.

WHEN

WHEN I had finiſh'd this, I went down to the Company, and ſoon found an Opportunity, unperceived, to ſlip it into Mrs. *Marvir's* Hand. Scarce a Day paſs'd after this without my receiving a Letter, either through hers or her Huſband's Means. I will not trouble you with the Repetition of them, being of no great Conſequence to my Story, and would draw it into a Length too tedious for your Patience. By *thoſe* you have heard, you may gueſs the Purport of the *reſt*; ſo ſhall only tell you, that every one of his grew more preſſing for an Engagement of my Affection, and mine ſtill more complying. I paſſed my time *contentedly* enough, tho' not ſo *happily* as I wiſhed: The continual Aſſurances he gave me of his Paſſion, and the Hopes that through theſe Peoples Means I ſhould ſoon enjoy the Bleſſing of his Preſence, were Cordials ſufficient to keep a Love leſs ardent then mine alive. And, indeed, I had no great Exerciſe for my Patience: *Lyſander* was too eager, and his Agents too induſtrious, to permit *me* to grow cool in my Deſires, or imagine *him* to be ſo.

ONE Evening, my Mother and I being invited to ſup at *Marvir*'s Houſe, while he engaged her in a ſerious Diſcourſe, his Wife took me into the Garden. The Tranſports of my beating Heart inform'd me to what End I was brought there, before ſhe had time to tell me that *Lyſander* waited my Approach in the Arbour. But, when I came near enough to ſee him, no Confuſion ſure was ever equal to mine: —— The Reflection that this as but the third Time I had *ſeen* him, —— but the *ſecond* in which I had an Opportunity to ſpeak to him; —— the Condeſcenſions of my Letters; —— and that which I now gave of meeting him, came all at once into my Head, and I was ready to ſink with Shame. But never did any Votary approach the Image of the Saint he worſhipped with more Humility and awful Reverence than *Lyſander* me: He fell at my Feet,——embraced my Knees, and kiſs'd my Hands

with

with ſuch a tender Tranſport,— ſuch an enchanting Mixture of Delight and Fear, as one would think no falſe Love could feign, and was impoſſible to behold unmoved: My Spirits were in too violent an Agitation to ſuffer me to raiſe him from the Poſture he was in, till gaining Confidence to do it himſelf, and interpreting my Diſorders in his favour, he took me in his Arms, all bluſhing,— trembling, and incapable of Defence; and laying his Head upon my panting Boſom, ſeemed to breathe out all his Soul in fervent Tenderneſs. He held me thus ſome Moments before I knew what I was doing; and when, at laſt, I ſtruggled to get free, it was ſo faintly, that he might eaſily perceive the Liberties he had taken were not unpardonable. I looked for Mrs. *Marvir*, deſigning to upbraid *her* for the Boldneſs her Gueſt had been guilty of; but ſhe was gone, and the Reproaches I made him were ſuch as did not diſcourage him from a Repetition of his Crime. In ſhort, all the Time of our being together (which I believe was above an Hour) was paſt in nothing but offending and forgiving. I found by myſelf that Love is a Paſſion that diſdains Reſtraint, and thought it unjuſt to be angry at almoſt any thing the Force of it might influence him to commit. To go about to tell you what he ſaid,——in what Manner he look'd,——and with what Graces every thing he did, and ſpoke, were accompanied, would be to wrong him; for no Words, no Accents, no Motions but his own, can give you a juſt Idea of his Perfections.——Never was any ſo form'd to *charm*, and to *betray!*——Never was ſuch foul Deceit, Hypocriſy, and Villany, couched in ſuch ſeeming Sweetneſs, Softneſs, and Sincerity,——Heaven! with what a counterfeited Vehemence has he exclaim'd againſt the Inconſtancy of his Sex,——With what an Appearance of Sanctity and Truth has he invoked the Saints and Angels to be Witneſſes of his Vows! when, laviſh of them, he has a thouſand——thouſand Times proteſted, that *Clemira* ſhould

ever

ever be more dear to him than Life! O! record 'em, all ye bleſſed Spirits, and in the laſt great Day, when I alone can hope for Juſtice, bring 'em in dreadful Teſtimony againſt him, and force his black, his leprous Soul to own Conviction!

HERE the Remembrances of ſome Paſſages made this unhappy Lady, wholly unable to proſecute her Diſcourſe; and all that *Belinda* could ſay to mitigate the Rage of Temper ſhe was rais'd to, prov'd of no Effect, till a Shower of new-returning Tears in part allay'd the Tempeſt. When ſhe was a little come to herſelf, After this (reſum'd ſhe) I had many Opportunities, by Mrs. *Marvir*'s Contrivance, of indulging my fond Wiſhes in *Lyſander*'s Preſence; and ſo zealous was he in making me believe the Paſſion he pretended was ſincere, that in thoſe Days, when there was no other Way to ſee me, he would come diſguis'd, and walk before the Houſe till I had taken notice of him: Then by ſome Motion diſcover who he was, and tell me by his Eyes a thouſand tender Things; nor ſtir from the Place, till by my withdrawing myſelf he knew it was improper he ſhould ſtay any longer. I cannot but ſay, fierce as my Paſſion was before, this uncommon Aſſiduity of his made a vaſt Addition to it; and I thought it the greateſt Hardſhip in the World that I could not have the Freedom of converſing with him, without all this Difficulty on both Sides. Mrs. *Marvir*, who kept continual Watch over my Humour, took this Advantage of my Diſcontent, and whenever we were alone, endeavour'd to heighten it: She was always repreſenting the Injuſtice my Mother did me, in debarring me from all thoſe Liberties young Ladies in this Kingdom are permitted to enjoy; and made uſe of all her Cunning to convince me, that thoſe Reſtrictions were laid upon me, only to wean me by Degrees from the Pleaſures of the World, that I might be the more willing to accept of a Huſband, who, ſhe told me, my Mother had provided for me: By what I can gueſs from her Diſ-

courſe

courſe (ſaid ſhe) you are to be married to a Country Gentleman, and that in ſo ſhort a Time, as will amaze you. She ſpoke this in ſuch a Manner, as gave me no Suſpicion of the Truth; and recollecting how much my Mother had labour'd to perſuade me into a good Opinion of a Country Life, was aſſur'd in my Mind that ſhe had really ſome body in View, to whom ſhe deſign'd to ſacrifice me; and 'tis impoſſible to repreſent the Perplexity this Belief involv'd me in. If any ſuch Thing happen, Madam (ſaid I) how ſhou'd I avoid it? I know not (anſwer'd this wicked Woman, having brought me to the Point ſhe aim'd at) unleſs, by chuſing a Guardian, you entirely diveſt your Mother of the Power of diſpoſing of you. She ſaid no more at this Time, becauſe my Mother happen'd to come into the Room; but whenever they had an Opportunity, it was with ſuch like Speeches, both ſhe and her Huſband entertain'd me; till at laſt, the Fears of what they infus'd into my Imagination, —— the Hopes of enjoying my belov'd Liberty, and my infinitely more belov'd *Lyſander*'s Company uncontrol'd, made me reſolve to do as they adviſ'd. I could think of no Perſon ſo proper for me to make choice of for a Guardian, as *Marvir* himſelf. It was not very difficult to perſuade him to it (it being the only thing he wanted) tho' at firſt he ſeemed averſe. Every thing being concluded on, one Morning, before my Mother was out of Bed, I left her Houſe, and went to *Marvir*'s, whence immediately I took Coach with him for *London*; and by electing him according to Law, put it out of her Power to oblige me to return. Her Behaviour, on the firſt Knowledge of what I had done, was all Diſtraction; ſhe fell into Fits, rav'd, came to *Marvir*'s Houſe, and without any Regard to that Decorum ſhe was us'd ſo ſtrictly to obſerve, loudly exclaim'd againſt their Treachery, and my Ingratitude and Diſobedience. I had not Aſſurance to appear before her; and they (having gain'd their End) could endure the

the Brunt of her Upbraidings. In a few Days we remov'd to *London*, and I was out of the Fear of meeting her; but her Tenderneſs ſoon getting the better of her Indignation, ſhe ſent a Letter to me, full of Perſwaſions, in the moſt endearing Terms, to return to her again. I had the Courage to write to her, tho' I had not to ſee her, and returned an Anſwer of Excuſes for the Meaſures I had taken; but told her it was wholly owing to that unreaſonable Reſtraint ſhe had laid me under; —— that I abandon'd her, only in Purſuit of that innocent Liberty, which all Perſons of my Age were deſirous of enjoying; and that I never would make uſe of it to the Diſadvantage of my Reputation, or the Diſhonour of my Family; and that in all material Affairs of Life, tho' I had choſe a *Guardian*, I would do nothing without conſulting *her*. This was far from being any Satisfaction to her; ſhe writ me ſeveral Letters, ſometimes entreating, ſometimes commanding and threatning; and engag'd all thoſe Relations who were near enough to intereſt themſelves in my Behaviour, to come, and talk to me: But the People I was with, took care I ſhould be ſeen by none of them; alledging, as a Proof of their Love to me, that they would not have me teas'd with any Sollicitations of that Nature. I was very well ſatisfy'd with their Proceedings: I ſaw *Lyſander* every Day; and while I liſten'd to his Vows, ſhould not have been pleas'd with an Interruption of any kind. That ardent, yet reſpectful Paſſion which appeared in all his Words and Actions, was to me a Heaven, which nothing elſe could give. I had not, for ſome time, any Reaſon to ſuſpect he had the leaſt diſhonourable Thought; for tho' the little Power I had of diſguiſing my Sentiments, had made me guilty of many imprudent Actions, and embolden'd him to the taking greater Freedoms than otherwiſe he would have dared to have attempted, yet he offer'd nothing which juſtly could be call'd offenſive to Virtue; till one Night; —— Oh! ever be accurſt that Night, ——

that

that Hour, ——that damn'd undoing Minute, when all the good Angels ſlept, and left to Fiends the Fate of *Cleomira!* I had undreſs'd, and thrown my ſelf on the Bed, reſtleſs and uneaſy that *Lyſander* had not been to viſit me that Day; for it was now become an inconſolable Affliction to me to paſs four and twenty Hours without ſeeing him. I was ſo buried in Thought, that I heard not the Tread of any body coming into my Chamber, till I ſaw a Man ſtand cloſe by me. It was about Ten o-Clock, at that Time of the Year when there is ſcarce any Darkneſs; and willing to indulge Contemplation, I had not call'd for Candles, and could not preſently diſcern who was there; but not ſuſpecting it any other than Mr. *Marvir*, (who might be come to call me to Supper) without removing from the Poſture I was in, aſk'd careleſsly what he wanted. He muſt be a very ill Judge of Happineſs (anſwer'd he) that could form a Wiſh beyond the Treaſure which this Bed contains. Theſe Words, and the Accent of his Voice, always dear and charming to my Ears, ſoon told me it was *Lyſander*, and oblig'd me to endeavour to riſe; but he had thrown himſelf down by me while he was ſpeaking, and ſeizing both my Hands, and gently forcing them to circle his Waiſt, join'd his Lips to mine with too ſtrenuous a Preſſure to ſuffer me to reproach the Liberties he took. —— What cou'd I do! ſurpris'd in this unguarded Moment!——Full of Deſires and tender Languiſhments before, his glowing Touch now diſſolv'd my very Soul, and melted every Thought to ſoft Compliance! —In ſhort, I *ſuffer'd*, ——or, rather let me ſay, I cou'd *not reſiſt* his proceeding from one Freedom to another, till there was nothing left for him to aſk, or me to grant. The guilty Tranſport paſs'd, a thouſand Apprehenſions all at once invaded me! Remorſe and Shame ſupply'd the Place of Extaſy!——Tears fill'd my Eyes,——cold Tremblings ſeiz'd my Limbs,——and my Breaſt heav'd no more with Joy, but Horror!—

too

too ſure Preſages of that future Woe, which this black Hour brought forth!———It was not in the lovely Undoer's Power, dear as he was, to make me ſatisfied with what I had done; and the whole Time he ſtaid with me, which was beſt Part of the Night, I utter'd nothing but Reproaches. The next Day, and many following ones, I entertain'd him in no other Manner; and it was ſome Weeks before all his Wit, his Tenderneſs, and ſeeming Truth, could make me hope I had not done a Deed, I ſhould, all my Life, have occaſion to repent. But what is it a Woman may not in time be perſwaded to, by the Man ſhe loves? He behav'd himſelf in ſuch a manner, ſo kind, ſo ſoft, ſo raviſhingly tender, reſpectful and engaging,——made ſo many ſolemn Proteſtations of eternal Faith, and imprecated ſuch unheard of Curſes on his Falſhood, if ever he ſhould give me cauſe to tax him with it, that one would think indeed the moſt hardened Villain could not thus have dared to dreſs his Perjuries in ſuch a form of Sanctity!——— How could I then, who *loved* him, *diſbelieve* him?— No, it was not in Nature,——it was not in Reaſon, that, after what he had ſworn, I could be doubtful of his Sincerity or Honour; and I muſt have conſidered him as monſtrouſly unworthy of my Love, before I could think there was a Poſſibility he ſhould ever ceaſe to love me. Thus was I, at laſt, raiſed to the higheſt Pinnacle of human Felicity! an Aſſurance of the real and everlaſting Tenderneſs of the Man who took up all my Wiſhes! But when I thought myſelf moſt happy,——moſt ſecure, I was on a ſudden thrown from all my Height of Tranſport, to the loweſt State of Miſery and Deſpair. Ever ſince my being at *Marvir*'s Houſe, I had not paſs'd one Day without ſeeing *Lyſander*; and the firſt Abſence, which was about a Week, filled me with moſt terrible Suſpicions. I did dot fail to acquaint him with them by Letters; which he anſwered with the ſame Fondneſs he had accuſtomed me to, and made Excuſes for not viſiting me in that time, which ſeem'd

plauſible

plauſible enough. When next I ſaw him, nothing ſeem'd more endearing,——nothing more ardent than he ſeem'd to be; yet he pretended ſome Buſineſs, and ſtaid not with me ſo long as he was wont. After he was gone, happening to caſt my Eyes on the Ground I ſaw a Paper lying, which I, imagining it might be dropp'd by him, haſtily took up: Part of it had been torn off, and what remained was ſo blotted that I could ſcarce read it; I diſcovered, however, that it was a moſt paſſionate Declaration of Love to ſome Woman, but who, I was altogether a Stranger, for there was no Name.——You may believe (my dear *Belinda*) this was enough to give a Heart, ſo truly tender as mine, a moſt terrible Alarm! I laid it up carefully, deſigning to ſhew it him when he ſhould come next Day, as he had promiſed he would; but, alas! I expected him many ſucceeding ones in vain; till growing quite out of Patience, I writ to him according to the Dictates of my Jealouſy and Diſcontent. This, indeed, engaged a Viſit from him; and after he had again made ſome ſlight Pretences for his Abſence, began to *rally* me, with ſo much Artifice, for the Imagination I had formed of his being in love in another Place, that I was weak enough, on his ſwearing it was ſo, to believe the Letter I had found was only a foul Copy of one he intended to ſend to me, in that Time when he had not an Opportunity of ſeeing me; and was pretty well ſatisfied as to his Conſtancy. But tho' I aſſur'd him, my whole Dependance on the Truth of what he ſaid hung on the Proof of his viſiting me as uſual, and he ſeem'd willing I ſhould judge his Truth by that Teſtimony, yet I ſaw him not again in another Week. Now the Miſt, my good Opinion of him had caſt before my Eyes, began to wear off, and *Reaſon*, unobſcured by *Paſſion*, ſhew'd me how truly wretched I had made myſelf: —— But what did it avail? My Fame, my Virtue, and my Peace of Mind were loſt, no more to be retrieved: Penetration was but the Mirror which ſhew'd me my Deformity, but could

direct

direct me to no Means which cou'd reſtore thoſe Beauties, which Guilt and Shame had utterly defaced. From ſeeing me every Day, he had already fallen to once a Week; ſoon he came but once a Fortnight; afterwards a Month; and that too was to be accounted a Favour.——Soft as I am by *Nature*, and made more ſo by *Love*, this Uſage turn'd me all to Indignation: I rav'd, upbraided, threaten'd, ſaid I knew not what, and ſometimes was reſolv'd to revenge my Injuries by his Death; but, alas! he grew not leſs lovely, for his being leſs faithful; and whatever I determined againſt him in his *Abſence*, was in his *Preſence* all diſſolv'd. 'Tis true, he never came without renewing his former Proteſtations of eternal Faith, and coin'd each Time ſome new-invented Oath to aſſure me he was ſtill the ſame. He *ſeem'd* to mourn the Neceſſity of being ſo often abſent, with a Tenderneſs equal to that I *truly* felt; but as perfect a Maſter as he was in the Art of Feigning, I was too well acquainted with the Force of *Love*, not to know that where it is ſincere, no Obſtacles wou'd be able to impede the Gratification of it; and one Day when he had been telling me a tedious Tale of Buſineſs, and Hurry of Affairs, and I know not what, which had prevented his coming, I cou'd not reſtrain the Violence of my juſt Reſentment: Ungrateful Man! (ſaid I) when watchful for my Ruin, no Buſineſs had the Power to hold you; all Day, and every Day, each flying Minute was Witneſs of your Vows:—But now,——now, when I have given up all my Soul!——am loſt to all the World but you! I may alone, unpity'd, mourn my Fate, and curſe the Fondneſs that betray'd me to your Scorn!—He wou'd not ſuffer me to go on long in this Strain; but taking me in his Arms, and tenderly embracing me, Unjuſt and Cruel Charmer (interrupted he) if I could be capable of the Coldneſs, the Perfidy you reproach me with, I could not ſure have Courage to appear before you:—Nor cou'd *you*, if you really believ'd me guilty, with that dear, that Angel-Look behold me;—No,

'tis

'tis the Height of Paſſion only makes you talk thus: As ſuch I take it; and tho' I grieve to ſee you rend your gentle Breaſt with cauſleſs Agonies, yet I conſider it with a kind of Tranſport, ſince it aſſures me I am indeed more valuable to you, than any Merit but my Truth can give me Title to. O the Diſſembler! with what Air of Tenderneſs did he utter theſe, and a thouſand the like Expreſſions? and with what inexpreſſible Endearments were they accompany'd?——Enrag'd and ſtormy, as I was before, my Soul, now all becalm'd, again *believ'd!* ——and was again *deceiv'd!* —In this manner did I continue for a conſiderable Time; ſometimes hoping,---ſometimes deſpairing,——but never certain or confirm'd of any Thing! —all Horror in his Abſence, —all Extaſy in his Preſence!——The Buſineſs he pretended, which was Attendance at Court, where he daily expected Preferment, was feaſible enough; but then I thought it impoſſible that no Hour, no Moment in a Week, or in ſo *many* Weeks, cou'd not be ſpar'd.———In fine, my Brain was in a perpetual Whirl;———Reflection, toſt in wild Uncertainty, became disjointed quite; and tho' I was always *muſing*, yet I was often without the power of *thinking*;———all my *Days* were ſpent in doubtful Expectation, and my *Nights* in Tears, and Heart-rending Agonies, too terrible for Deſcription, —and if ſometimes Nature o'er-weary'd ſunk into a Slumber, it cou'd not be call'd Reſt; for even then, my ever-wakeful Fancy hurry'd my Spirits with confus'd Idea's in tormenting Dreams.—— *Lyſander*'s Image was never from my Sight, and always he appear'd unkind, and far unlike the Dear,—the Soul-enſlaving Lover he had been, and ſtill wou'd feign. To add to my Affliction, I was with Child, and every Motion of the unborn Innocent increas'd at once my Tenderneſs and Grief.——'Tis not in Thought to form any juſt Notion of what I felt:—— All Paſſions, but Hatred, took their Turn to perſecute me; and ſure, had not Heaven reſerv'd me for an Example of its Power in length'ning Woe to a Degree

gree beyond what cou'd be imagined. I cou'd not have ſurviv'd the Torments of an Hour. On his firſt declining to viſit me, I writ often to him; but of late had deſiſted from giving him that Trouble, becauſe he had told me, his Father whoſe Hands they might poſſibly fall into, wou'd have Curioſity enough to open them. Whether this was Reality, or whether he ſaid ſo only to ſpare himſelf the Pain of counterfeiting a Tenderneſs any oftner than he was oblig'd to, in my Preſence, I know not; but I had that implicite Obedience to his Will in every Thing, that I very ſeldom put it to the Venture. But, one Day, after ſilently enduring an Abſence of five Weeks, I was no longer able to reſtrain the impatient Struggles of my Soul, and ſent him theſe Lines.

To my Too-dear LYSANDER.

PARDON me, if, convuls'd and torn with Pangs too dreadful for Expreſſion, the Anguiſh of my Soul, in ſpite of me, breaks forth into Complainings.——Am I for ever to live this Life of curſed Uncertainty?—Is there a Neceſſity your Actions *muſt always contradict your* Words?—*Oh! be once ſincere, and tell me which I muſt believe!—There was a Time when with a thouſand Vows you ſwore, that Abſence was the ſevereſt Tryal a Lover cou'd go through——yet now you bear it,—bear it with Eaſe,—with Unconcern!—and can I then ſtill hope you love?—O Heav'n! it is not, cannot be!—By your own Arguments you ſtand convicted, and I endeavour to deceive myſelf in vain.—Heart-rending Thought! I long have held you True,—believ'd your Oaths with ſuch a Faith as what we pay to the Divine Myſteries of Salvation; and 'tis difficult,—'tis wondrous to* think *you can be falſe!—What then muſt be the* Proof? *Madneſs!—! Confuſion!——Everlaſting Woe!—Horror without a Name!—Save,—ſave me from it! Diſſemble yet a little longer; my*

Fears

Fears *will quickly ſend me to my Grave; let not* Deſpair *weigh down my ſinking* Soul, *as well as* Body—*If I no longer have the power to pleaſe you, let the Remembrance of thoſe happy Moments in which I* had, *engage, at leaſt, your Gratitude, —if not your* Love: *Bleſs me with your* Friendſhip: —*Pity me, if no more; for, my* Lyſander, *ſure I merit that.*——*The Thoughts of you anticipate my earlieſt Prayers, and ſtill continue for my Evening Theme!*——*How often, when all have ſlept, and nothing but the Stars and ſilent Moon were conſcious of my Watchings, have I pour'd out the Anguiſh of my bleeding Heart, and to thoſe dumb and unavailing Witneſſes vented the wild Extravagance of my Paſſion, rather than wound your Ears with the unwelcome Tale! 'Tis harder to* accuſe you, *than to* die;—*yet, while I have Breath, 'twill all be ſpent in Wailings, if you are ſtill cruel enough to ſuffer me to linger in a Condition which juſtly gives me the Title of*

The moſt Injur'd,

and moſt Miſerable

CLEOMIRA.

AT the return of my Meſſenger, I receiv'd an Anſwer, which you will ſcarce believe cou'd be writ by the ſame Hand, or dictated by the ſame Heart from which thoſe you have already heard proceeded.

To the Lovely CLEOMIRA.

YOUR Sex's Souls are of ſuch narrow Space, that the leaſt Paſſion ſwells them even to burſting: I wou'd have the Woman I admire endeavour to enlarge her Genius, and find room for other Views than Love.—Not but I think myſelf infinitely oblig'd to yours, *and ſhall*

ſhall never ceaſe the Profeſſions of mine.—*I will ſee you in a few Days, and, if poſſible, convince you that I am*

Your moſt faithful

LYSANDER.

ONE would think I needed no other Proof than the Style and the Shortneſs of this *Billet*, to inform me, that I was, indeed, as wretched as I could be; but ſpite of Reaſon, I muſt join in his Barbarity, and be my own Tormenter. —My Soul, too curious, would ſearch deeper ſtill, though ſure to find what would but more diſtract me. The Fellow whom I employed to carry my Letter, told me, that not finding *Lyſander* at home, he was directed to the Place where he was, and deliver'd it to him in the Preſence of a young Lady, whom he was leading to a Chariot; and that as ſoon as he had writ the Anſwer they went out together. This was enough to give my already *juſtly*-ſuſpecting Heart a jealous Curioſity; and I immediately diſpatch'd him again to find out, if poſſible, who the Lady was. He was ſo ſucceſsful in his Enquiry, that he brought me word that her Name was *Meliſſa*, and that *Lyſander* was frequently with her;———that they had been ſeen together at the Play, at the Ring, in the Mall, and ſeveral other publick Places. If I was before alarm'd, what now became of me, at this Information? I had formerly had an Acquaintance with this Woman, and knew her Temper to be the moſt intriguing upon Earth; and though from a very mean *Fortune*, and worſe *Character*, a Gentleman of a good Eſtate had raiſed her to an envied State of Grandeur, ſhe had neither Gratitude nor Conduct ſufficient to prevent her from *coquetting* with every Man that thought her worth taking notice of; nay, ſhe was ſo notoriouſly imprudent, I may ſay *ſhameleſs*, that ſhe *ſought* all Opportunities of diſhonouring her Husband, and could not hear of a Man famed for any Per-

fection, without desiring to engage him. She would write to the most absolute Strangers; and her being often repuls'd by those whose Discretion made them despise her, did not discourage her from attempting others. This is *(Belinda)* the true Character of this vile Woman; and the Reflection, that a Creature so every way undeserving should rob me of his Heart, rouz'd that little Pride which all Women have some Share of, to a *Disdain*, which, not able to overcome by my more superior *Softness*, gave me Disorders which cannot be expressed. Since I am to be abandoned, (said I to my self) I ought to be pleased that he has abandoned me for a Creature whom none will envy him the Possession of:———One, who is not of a Humour to regard any one farther than the Reputation of being admired by him:———One, to whom *all* Men are alike; and, as charming as he is, will not fail to sacrifice him to the next that makes his Addresses to her. And yet, who knows (cried I again) but this unfaithful,——this inconstant Creature may engage him longer than I, with all my Truth and Tenderness, could do: She has *Arts* to which *my Innocence* is a Stranger, and will, no doubt, make use of them all to secure a Conquest so much to the Advantage of her Glory. In this Manner did I torment myself; and though I thought nothing could add to what I felt before, yet now I found, that to be neglected for *another* was a Sting more terrible than the Neglect itself. Once I believed that the *Death* of *Lysander* would be the extremest of all Woes; but now I wish'd him dead, rather than in the Possession of a *Rival*.

WHEN next I saw my Traytor, I uttered all that my Rage and Jealousy suggested; but, with his usual Artifice, he appear'd unmov'd: And when I upbraided him with the Leisure he had to wait on *others*, when he had none for *me*, he swore, That being an intimate Acquaintance of her Husband's, and meeting them by Accident at a Place where he had Business, was desired by him to conduct her where she was going;

going; which Piece of Gallantry, he ſaid, he cou'd not handſomely refuſe. To give the more Credit to this, he ſeem'd to diſlike her Perſon,——ridicul'd her Humour,——and laugh'd ſo heartily at my being capable of any Uneaſineſs on her Account, that I was half perſuaded to believe him. I had not, however, ſo entire a Dependance on his Truth, but that I employ'd (unknown to *Marvir*'s People, who I found were his Creatures) the ſame Man, who had brought me the firſt Intelligence, to watch him wherever he went, reſolving to be ſatisfy'd one way or other. Alas! I fancy'd that if I cou'd be once thoroughly aſſur'd of his Perfidiouſneſs, I ſhou'd be able to tear him from my Soul, at leaſt extirpate all the Tenderneſs I had for him: But how little did I know myſelf? When by the Diligence of my Spy, I found out that he viſited her often, —was with her even at thoſe very Times when he pretended the utmoſt Regret that he cou'd not be with me;——nay, diſcover'd that they had private Meetings; and, by all Circumſtances, was convinc'd, not only that ſhe was a Rival infinitely more belov'd than I, but alſo that ſhe was in Poſſeſſion of all thoſe Joys, which to obtain, I had forfeited my Innocence, my Honour, and my Peace of Mind for ever: ——In ſpite, I ſay, of all theſe Proofs,——theſe ſtabbing Proofs of his Ingratitude, I cou'd not,—did not love him leſs. I reproach'd him, indeed, and endeavour'd to make him think my Reſentment had extinguiſh'd my Tenderneſs; but he ſtill deny'd each particular of my Accuſation, and, at laſt, ſeem'd angry that I diſturbed his Sincerity; 'till I, mean-ſpirited Wretch, was forc'd to appear ſatisfy'd with what he ſaid, leſt by perſiſting to *allege* what, I found, he was determin'd never to *confeſs*, I ſhou'd provoke him never to ſee me more. And when I conſulted my fond doating Heart, found I cou'd better bear to ſhare him with another, than have no Intereſt in him at all: But what I ſuffer'd in ſuch a Submiſſion may, perhaps, be gueſs'd, but never deſcrib'd. It was now

my Woes fell thick upon me; my Pregnancy began now to diſcover itſelf to all who ſaw me; and *Marvir* and his Wife, who had all this time counterfeited an Ignorance of what had paſs'd between me and *Lyſander*, ſeem'd prodigiouſly uneaſy at it, pretended a Concern for the Reputation of their Houſe; us'd me in a manner which I little expected from them, of all the World; and told me plainly, that I muſt not continue with them any longer: But if I wou'd go into the Country till I was deliver'd of my Burthen, they wou'd enquire for a Place where I might be in private. I complain'd to *Lyſander* of their Unkindneſs; but receiv'd very little Conſolation from him: He only told me, he was ſorry they ſhould behave otherwiſe to me than I had reaſon to expect, but that he believ'd they *meant* well; and that he cou'd not help joining with them in the Opinion, it was beſt for me to go into the Country. My Concern for leaving a Place which contain'd all I valu'd in the World, and the cool Tranquility with which he adviſ'd me to baniſh myſelf from him, were new Stabs, to my already-bleeding Heart: But I had now been a good while accuſtom'd to receive Wounds of that Nature, and my Spirits were too much depreſs'd with a continual Weight of Sorrow, to be able to exert themſelves to reſent almoſt any Uſage. Beſides, what could I do? helpleſs as I was! I had no Friend to whom I durſt make Application; and muſt be oblig'd, in the Condition I was, to do whatever thoſe, in whoſe Power I had put myſelf, would have me. They were ſo eager for my Departure, that a Place was ſoon found for me to go to; and in a few Days I took leave of that Town, and that Perſon, for whoſe Sake I had renounced every thing that ought to have been dear to me. *Lyſander* had indeed the Complaiſance to accompany me a few Miles on Horſeback; and perceiving me ready to die with Grief, made a thouſand Promiſes of coming down to viſit me in a ſhort time, tho' I had no reaſon from his late Behaviour, to hope he would do

do as he ſaid; yet this ſeeming Kindneſs a little reviv'd me, and I went thro' my Journey with more Fortitude than I imagin'd I could. As ſoon as I arriv'd at the Place deſtin'd for my Abode, I writ to him, reminding him of the Promiſe he had made, and conjuring by every tender Plea I could invent, to make it good; but I receiv'd no Anſwer. Always willing to excuſe him as far as I was able, I fancied my Letter had by ſome Accident miſcarried, and ſent another; but to as little Purpoſe as before. —Then I grew wild with Grief, and was ready, in ſome ungovernable Sallies of Paſſion, to lay violent Hands on my own Life.— I reſolv'd at laſt, if poſſible, to *extort* an Anſwer from him; and prevail'd on a Countryman, for a conſiderable Gratification, to ride to Town on Purpoſe to deliver a Letter into his own Hands, and charg'd him not to return without ſome Token he had ſeen him. The Contents of what I writ, were theſe:

To my Inhuman and Unrelenting Charmer.

IS it then poſſible that Lyſander, *the proteſting* Lyſander, *can from all Angel change to a very* Fiend? *For only they delight in the Perdition they occaſion.* —*Have you with your* Love *thrown off all* Pity *too and* Complaiſance, *that you vouchſafe not to condole, at leaſt, the Ruins you have made?*——*O moſt ungrateful, cruel, barbarous, of all that ever was call'd Man!* —*What have I done that can deſerve ſuch Uſage?*— *Is it becauſe I have forſook the Ties of Duty, Intereſt, Honour,* —*given up my Innocence,* —*my Peace, and everlaſting Hopes, that you deſpiſe me?*——*Monſter, for whom have I done this?* —*Can you reflect it was for you, and your whole Soul not melt in Tenderneſs and ſoft Compaſſion?* —*Yes, yes, you can!* —*Wretch that I am!* —*I have caſt away all that could make me truly valuable, and now am juſtly ſubjected to your Scorn.* —*But tho' I* live *unworthy of your* Love, *my*

Death *muſt ſurely give you ſome* Concern,—*at leaſt, the* Manner *of it, when you ſhall know it was for* you *I died:* —*That my laſt Breath form'd nothing but your Name;* --*and in the extremeſt Agonies of my departing Soul, lamented more your Cruelty than all that dreadful Separation could inflict.*—*O do not, therefore, triſle with a Paſſion, which, if the Strength of Reaſon in your Sex keeps you from being too deeply touch'd with, is too impetuous for the Weakneſs of mine to reſiſt; and who can tell how far the Torrent may tranſport me?*—*Hiſtory is not without Millions of Examples of Women, who have dar'd to die, when Life became a Burthen; and ſure, if* any *e'er could juſtify Self-Murder, the wretched* Cleomira *may:* ——*None ever* lov'd,——*none ever* deſpair'd *like me, or had ſo* juſt *a Cauſe for both.*—— *The Means of Death are always eaſy to be obtain'd, and I am this Moment hurried to that Rage of Temper, that I know not how long I ſhall be able to retain the Uſe of it.* ———*O then be quick, and ſave* my *Soul the Guilt of* Murder, *and* your own *the Pangs of never-ending* Remorſe, *which, when too late to remedy, you'll feel!*—*Yes, forgotten and abandon'd as I am, when I am dead, my* Ghoſt *will be before you ever, haunt all your Dreams,—poiſon your Pleaſures, and diſtract Reflection: Then, though I want a Voice, my Wrongs will ſpeak, and rouze your ſleeping Conſcience to Remembrance of your* Vows, ——*your broken damning Vows!* —— *Heaven! that Heaven, whoſe* Bleſſings *you have* renounc'd, *whoſe* Curſes *you have* imprecated, *if ever you prov'd* falſe, *will then exert the Power of ſwifteſt Vengeance, and Penitence be vain to waſh away your Guilt, or call me back to Life!*—*For me, I have nought to fear; I feel already all the Pains of* Hell; *nor can another World torment me worſe than* this *has done.* —*Horror and Madneſs overtake me!* —*I know not what I ſay, and to my other Crimes am ready to add Blaſphemy;* ——*cou'd curſe Heaven, and Earth, and Man;* —*wiſh to behold the World in Flames;* —*the Univerſe diſſolv'd;* —*for all, all are Foes to wretched* Cleomira! ——*O eaſe*

me,

me,—pity me,—write to me,——ſee me; if not for mine, *yet for the ſake of the dear yet Unborn;—the tender Pledge of our* once *mutual Love!——Think how the frighted Innocent ſtarts at its Mother's Anguiſh, and is a ſad Partaker of all the Sufferings you inflict on me.—I will if poſſible, ſupport the galling Load of Life till the Return of my Meſſenger; but in your Anſwer is the Fate of*

The Undone

CLEOMIRA.

ALL the Horror and Diſtraction which I endeavour'd to repreſent in this Letter, was infinitely ſhort of what I truly felt. I had ſo little Hope of Comfort from him it was ſent to, that all the time of the Fellow's being gone I had one continu'd Agony, with the Apprehenſion that at his Return I ſhould be more aſcertain'd of *Lyſander's* Cruelty; and had his Stay been long, I believe it would have been impoſſible for me to have ſupported it with Life: but the poor Man's Speed out-run my Expectations, eager as they were; and though it was fifty Miles to *London*, he diſpatch'd his Buſineſs, and came back in two Days. As ſoon as he ſaw me, he gave me a Teſtimony of his Succeſs in the Buſineſs I employ'd him in; and trembling between Hope and Fear, I found in it theſe Words:

To the Unkind CLEOMIRA.

THE Diſcovery you make of your cauſleſs Uneaſineſs, gives me an infinite Concern: I had writ to you before, but that I waited to hear firſt from you, which, by all that is ſacred, I never have done till now; and if you have ſent, as your Meſſenger informs me you have, your Letters have miſcarried. Be aſſur'd that I am ſtill the ſame I ever was, and if any Part

of that Rapidity which in the Days of Courtſhip I profeſs'd, be now abated, it is ſufficiently made up by an Encreaſe of Tenderneſs. — *I beg, for the Sake of the dear Infant you mention, and for* mine, *who ſuffer with you in the Knowledge of your Griefs, that you will entirely baniſh them as Enemies as well to* Reaſon, *as to* Happineſs. *I hope the Hurry of my Affairs will ſhortly have an End, and I ſhall enjoy the boundleſs Pleaſure of ſeeing you again; till when I hope you will be ſatisfy'd with this Aſſurance, join'd to the innumerable others I have given you, that I am,*

Yours for ever,

LYSANDER.

YOU will certainly believe I was not in my Senſes, when I ſhall tell you, that theſe few, and indeed but ill-diſſembled Lines of Kindneſs, drove from my Boſom all the Anxiety that had poſſeſs'd it. I thought of nothing now but Joy and Rapture; and, in ſpite of all the Reaſons *Lyſander* had given me, accus'd myſelf of Injuſtice for writing to him in the Manner I did; and to make Reparation for the Reproaches of my laſt, dictated another according to the Tranſport I now was in. — I ought to bluſh at the Memory of ſo ſhameful a Weakneſs; but as I have promis'd you a faithful Relation of my Story, will omit nothing that may give you a juſt Notion of my Folly, or his Perfidiouſneſs and Ingratitude. The Lines I writ were theſe;

To my Ador'd LYSANDER.

TO make you able to conceive the Extaſy with which I read your dear obliging Letter, I muſt be able to inſpire you with that Sublimity of Paſſion, which Charms like your own, have only the Power of doing. But think, Lyſander, *think what a Soul muſt feel, rais'd*

rais'd from the loweſt Hell of Miſery to the higheſt Heaven of Felicity.—Oh! if I may credit thoſe endearing Lines, I have all that Fate can give! — if, did I ſay? I muſt, — I will:——Lyſander *is all Honour; and he a thouſand times has ſworn himſelf my everlaſting Votary:—How have I wrong'd you then,--Divineſt of your Sex!—But you muſt pardon me;—— I love, — am abſent, — am unworthy;—and in ſuch a Circumſtance, Patience were a Virtue out of Seaſon.--O therefore, let it not be too long before you bleſs me with your Preſence, leſt I again relapſe; — again be wretched:——Haſte to my Arms, while Hopes are quick within me, while vigorous Tranſport ſparkles in my Eyes, and my Soul glows with pleaſing Expectation.—Let not the Fervour of my Joy abate, till in your Arms I have nothing left to wiſh, and I indeed can ſay thou art* all *mine, as I am thine: My for-ever-dear* Lyſander.

Thine in the moſt paſſionate

and tender Manner,

CLEOMIRA.

AFTER this, I liv'd for ſome Time in more Tranquillity than I had known for many Months; and tho' it was paſt my Doubt that he had intrigued with *Meliſſa*, yet believing it but a tranſient Amour, of which he was now grown weary, found it no Difficulty to pardon him; and this renewing of his Tenderneſs to me, made me aſſure myſelf it wou'd be in the Power of no Woman, hereafter, to engage him ſo far as to render him forgetful of what he owed to me: But, alas! this Peace of Mind was not of any long Continuance: Eight or nine Days being elaps'd, without my receiving any Letter from him, I ſtill thought he was on coming, and the Hopes of *ſeeing* him, made full Amends for the not *hearing* from him: But after that my Fears again

return'd, and I grew reſtleſs as before. I conſtantly walked out every Evening into a Field that overlooked the Road, my Expectatious of meeting him not having quite forſook me. One of the Times that I was thus employ'd, I encounter'd a Perſon whoſe *Sight* gave me as much *Surprize*, as the *News* ſhe brought me did *Affliction*. It was my Nurſe, an honeſt faithful Creature, who hearing I had left *London*, enquir'd at *Marvir*'s Houſe where I was gone; but receiving no Satisfaction from them, by diligently aſking among the Neighbours, heard by one, who, by ſome Accident had learn'd it, that it was at * * * *; and ſo, by deſcribing me to the Stage-Coachman, diſcover'd what Part of the County I was carried to, and had travell'd down on purpoſe to acquaint me that my Mother lay at the point of Death! — that it was believed her Grief for my Behaviour had been the Cauſe of her Illneſs; —that all ſhe ſeemed to lament, was the Misfortunes ſhe fear'd wou'd fall upon me,—and wiſh'd for nothing but to ſee me before ſhe died. This ſad Account given me by the poor Woman, in the moſt moving Circumſtances, ſtruck me to the very Soul: —— I now began to conſider *whom* it was I had abandon'd, and *for* whom; and the more I reflected on *Lyſander*'s Ingratitude, the more ingrateful did I appear myſelf.— To be the Occaſion of a *Parent*'s Death,— a Parent who had always moſt tenderly lov'd me, and from whom I never had been abſent (*till* the Time of my utterly forſaking her) two Days together in my Life, fill'd me with ſo juſt a Horror, that I know not if it wou'd have been even in *Lyſander*'s Power to have conſoled me! How gladly wou'd I now have return'd to her, and implor'd her Pardon for my Errors,— endeavour'd to give her Comfort, and never leave her more: But, alas! the Condition I was in, deterr'd me from the Execution of theſe pious Wiſhes: I could entertain no Thoughts of appearing before her till I was deliver'd of that Witneſs of my Shame: Nor cou'd the poor Woman perſuade

ſuade me to it; ſhe rightly judg'd, that to ſee me as I then was, would rather be an *Encreaſe* of her Affliction, than any *Mitigation* of it; and told me ſhe would return without ſaying ſhe had ſeen me, ſince there was no Excuſe to be made for my not coming to *London*, but that which had better remain untold. The Concern which I perceiv'd in the Countenance of this faithful Creature, and the mannerly Freedom which ſhe took in expreſſing her Grief for the Miſfortunes I had brought on myſelf and Family, oblig'd me to give her the whole Hiſtory of my Affairs ſince the fatal Choice I made of *Marvir* for my Guardian; and withal, conjur'd her to make all poſſible Enquiry into *Lyſander*'s Character and Behaviour, and to give me a faithful Account of what ſhe could diſcover. But it ſeems ſhe had never learn'd to write, and I was unwilling the Secret ſhould be truſted to any other Hand, therefore deſir'd ſhe would treaſure it up in her Memory till I came to Town; which I reſolved to do as ſoon as I was brought to bed. I did not think it proper to carry her to the Houſe where I was, but giving her ſomething to refreſh herſelf in her Journey back, took my Leave of her, who parted from me with Tears in her Eyes, and all the Marks of an undiſſembled Grief. The more I ruminated on the ſad Relation ſhe had made me, the deeper Impreſſion it made in my Soul; and that, join'd to *Lyſander*'s Unkindneſs, who, in ſpite of his Promiſe, neither came, nor ſent to me, threw me into a Condition which is not to be conceiv'd. The Horrors of my *Mind* had ſuch an Influence over my Body, that it was impoſſible I ſhou'd be able to bring a living Child into the World: My Youth however, and the natural Goodneſs of my Conſtitution, brought me through that dangerous State, in which thoſe who find moſt Eaſe, have little Reaſon to be aſſur'd of Life —— I was ſafely deliver'd of a Boy; but, alas! the Grief-kill'd Infant never ſaw the Light, and I knew nothing what it was to be a Mother, but the Pains. It was certainly only my Im-

patience to be gone from a Place where I cou'd hear nothing of *Lyſander*, which made me willing to uſe any Means proper for the Recovery of my Strength; but the Hopes of ſeeing him, and knowing from his own Mouth my Doom, invigorated my drooping Spirits, and enabled me to endure Life, rather than die in the terrible Uncertainty I then was in. I found I was in a little more than a Month's time in a Condition to travel, and was too eager to delay a Moment. I wou'd not go to *Marvir*'s Houſe; becauſe I was aſſur'd I ſhou'd hear nothing there, but what they were order'd by *Lyſander* to tell me; and the late Unkindneſs they had ſhew'd me, made me reſolve never to live with them again; but as ſoon as I got to *London*, went directly to my Nurſe's, where I had the mournful Account of my dear Mother's Death told in ſo tender and moving a Manner, that I too was ready to expire at hearing it. When the firſt Hurry of my Grief, for ſo great and irretrieveable a Loſs was over, I began to queſtion her about *Lyſander*. She told me ſhe had neglected nothing that might be conducive to my Peace; but that all ſhe had been able to learn concerning him, was that he had lately an Intrigue with *Meliſſa*; that by their ill Conduct it had been diſcover'd to her Huſband, who, as a juſt Reward for her Infidelity, had entirely caſt her off; that ſhe was now reduc'd to the ſame wretched Circumſtances this injur'd Gentleman took her from; that *Lyſander* had little regard to the Miſeries he had contributed to bring her to; and ſhe was become one of the moſt expos'd and unpitied Women in the World. I confeſs I was ungenerous enough to find ſome little Conſolation in the Knowledge of my Rival's Misfortunes; not but, as much Reaſon as I had to hate her for being the firſt Occaſion of eſtranging the Affection of *Lyſander* from me, I ſhould have highly diſcommended him for his Neglect of her in her Affection, had it fallen on her only through her Love to him; but as I knew her Inclination to be ſo amorous (to give it no worſe

worſe a Name) that it had influenced her to commit *numerous* Faults of the like Nature, and even without the leaſt Temptation, I look'd on her as unworthy of Commiſeration.—But, to leave her to all the Miſeries which attend a common Proſtitution, I reſolv'd to know how I now ſtood in *Lyſander*'s Opinion. I writ to him, acquainting him that I was come to Town, deſiring to ſee him. When I had done this, I began to conſider my Affairs as to my Money: I thought it unſafe to be lodg'd any longer in *Marvir*'s Hands, and employ'd one to bring him to an Account; but that Villain had made ſuch Bills, and managed every thing ſo much to his own Advantage, that of my three thouſand Pounds, I found I had not much more than fifteen hundred remaining. The Perſon who I had engag'd in this Buſineſs, knew very well what my Father left me, and perſuaded me to have recourſe to Law; but the other knew himſelf ſecure enough as to that Point, and when it was hinted to him, he writ me a Letter to tell me, That if I inſiſted to bring him to any publick Account for the Money he had laid out, he could eaſily prove it had been expended for my Uſe; and bid me conſider, that in the Condition I had been there was Occaſion for more than a trifling Sum, to bribe thoſe to Secrecy who were oblig'd to be intruſted with the Knowledge of it. This was enough to let me ſee, if I attempted any thing againſt him, he would expoſe me in the moſt ſhameful Manner he could. I was glad therefore to accept what little I cou'd get, without daring to moleſt him for the reſt. But I will not (my dear *Belinda*) detain your Attention with any Particulars of this, which (in compariſon with my others) I look'd on as a trifling Vexation. Above a Week paſt ſince I ſent to *Lyſander*, and he had not yet anſwer'd my Letter. I was very well aſſured he had received it; and tho' I had little Hopes of the Continuance of his *Affection*, I expected from his *Complaiſance* ſome ſort of an Excuſe for the Inhumanity he had been guilty of.

of. My *Amazement* at this unlook'd-for Sight, was almoſt equal to my *Grief:* I now indeed felt more Reſentment than I had ever been capable of before: Neither to come to me, nor write, after ſo long an Abſence, and all I had ſuffer'd on his Account, cou'd make me conſider him no otherwiſe than as the vileſt, and moſt juſtly to be abhorr'd of all his Sex: And ſince I had no other way to revenge, reſolv'd to uſe my Pen to him in ſuch a Manner, as ſhou'd let him know I was no leſs inſenſible of his Indignities, than I had been of his Love. But before I did ſo, an Accident happen'd, to give me a freſh Theme for my Reproaches. Going through the *Strand* one Day in a Chair, it was ſuddenly ſtopp'd by a Footman, who told me his Lady deſired to ſpeak with me, and entreated I wou'd come into her Chariot. Neither the Livery, nor the Wearer of it were Strangers to me, and I knew he belong'd to a Lady, who, when I frequented the Court, was one of my greateſt Intimates; and I immediately diſcharg'd my Chair, and did as he deſir'd. Nothing could receive me with greater Demonſtrations of Kindneſs than *Semanthe* (for ſo I ſhall call her); and after ſhe had gently upbraided me with Breach of Friendſhip, for not letting her know where I had been all the time of my abſconding, began to aſk me a thouſand Queſtions about my Affairs. But mine was a Story very improper to be related to her, who, though I knew ſhe had a great deal of Good-nature, was not of a Temper to have approv'd my Proceedings; and therefore I turn'd the Diſcourſe as ſoon as I could into an Enquiry after her Affairs; which ſhe very ingenuouſly inform'd me of, little ſuſpecting the Effect of what ſhe told me. I am (ſaid ſhe) very near changing my Condition; but the Perſon who had prevail'd on me to do it, is ſo truly deſerving, that without a Bluſh I may confeſs, that the ſooner I yield to his Deſires, the ſooner I make myſelf the happieſt of my Sex. Ah, Madam! (cried I, interrupting her) take care how you depend

pend on the Sincerity of Mankind; it requires more Experience than you or I are Miſtreſs of, to form any juſt Judgment of their Deſerts. It is no Wonder that you talk ſo (reply'd ſhe) ſince I have not told you the Name of my Charmer; but when I have, I doubt not but you will acknowledge, as all the World who know him do, that every Perfection that Heaven can adorn a Mortal with, are center'd in my admir'd —O God! who was it but my *Lyſander* that ſhe nam'd —— Lightning could not have blaſted me more than this one Word, and I believe the moſt artful of all my Sex cou'd not in ſuch a Circumſtance have diſſembled her Confuſion; but the Shock was too mighty for my Weakneſs to ſuſtain, and, wholly depriv'd of Speech, I fell againſt the Side of the Chariot ſenſeleſs, and in all Appearance dead, and came not to myſelf till I was brought to *Semanthe*'s Lodgings. The firſt thing I ſaw, when I open'd my Eyes, was her, buſily employ'd in helping the Maids to uſe Means for my Recovery; the Sight of her, and the Remembrance of what ſhe had told me, threw me again into Convulſions, which laſted for ſome time; and when, at laſt, I had gathered Power to ſpeak, it was in ſuch a Faſhion, ſo wild, and ſo confuſed, that the Standers-by believ'd I was taken with a ſudden Fit of Frenzy. I deſir'd a Chair might be call'd, to carry me home; and making ſome ſort of an Apology, I knew not what, for the Trouble I had given, took Leave of my happy Rival. My poor Nurſe (for I had been at her Houſe ever ſince I came to Town) was terribly alarm'd at the Condition ſhe beheld me in; and, when I repeated the Occaſion of it, join'd with me in the moſt bitter Curſes we could both invent on the Perfidiouſneſs of Mankind. I remain'd for ſome time in mortal Agonies, unable to determine on any Thing; ſometimes I was for returning to *Semanthe*, to acquaint her with *Lyſander*'s Engagements to me, and implore her to forbear any further Invaſion on a Right I had ſo dearly purchaſed,—

ſometimes

ſometimes I was for going to *Lyſander*'s Houſe, and by publickly reproaching him with his Vows, deter him from the Breach of them :—But Modeſty rejected both theſe Reſolutions as ſoon as form'd ; and by my Nurſe's Perſuaſion (who fear'd that proceeding to any Violence, would be altogether unavailing, and only ſerve to expoſe me more) I contented myſelf with uttering the Fury I was poſſeſſed of in a Letter ; which, though incoherent and diſtracted as my Mind, I believe you will not think it too ſevere for the Occaſion.

To the Inconſtant, Ungenerous, and Perfidious LYSANDER.

I HAVE ſo long been accuſtomed to Indignities from you, that had I not in Poſſeſſion your Letters, thoſe Witneſſes of your well-diſſembled Tenderneſs, I ſhou'd believe I had been enchanted with ſome delightful Dream, and that there never was any ſuch Thing in Reality, as that Lyſander *cou'd take the Pains to make me believe he lov'd me ; ſince for no other Cauſe than returning the Paſſion he pretended, he now can uſe me with a Brutality as unexampled as my own Meanneſs of Spirit, which has hitherto ſuffer'd me to ſit down tamely with my Wrongs, and not endeavour, at leaſt, a ſuitable Revenge.*—Poiſons *and* Daggers *are the Upbraidings you ſhould receive from me :*—— *Yet I, fond Wretch, have ſtill ſubjected my very* Will *to yours, wrung my own* Hands, *while you have wrung my* Heart ;—*and when a thouſand times, with more than Devil-like Cruelty you've conjur'd up all that was raging in me, with my own Tears I have appeas'd that Tempeſt, which only Blood,*—your *deareſt Blood ſhould have had Power to quell.—Not one Particular of your Baſeneſs is unknown to me ;—Cold—Cold Betrayer ;—Dark deſigning Villain, your Neglect, your Abſence, your Silence all ſprung but from one Cauſe, that curſed Mutability of Temper, which damns half* your

your *Sex, as fond Belief and Tenderneſs does* ours.—*I was not ignorant of your Intrigue with* Meliſſa, *even from the Beginning, to the guilty Rapture which concluded it:—Yet I was patient, and but to* Heaven *accus'd you of Perfidiouſneſs:—Fool that I was, I hoped my Truth, my Conſtancy, and Softneſs, in time, might make a Convert of you:———But* now, *now that I find you are for ever loſt! that* Marriage *is about to give another that Title, which alone is due to me by your own Vows, and by all thoſe Sufferings I have bought it with!—Now I grow, indeed, like* you, *a very Fiend, and methinks could ſmile at Miſchief!—Yes, if you can,—if you dare attempt to make* Semanthe *yours, may the* Prieſt, *about to join you be ſtruck ſpeechleſs;———may Earthquakes ſhake the Ground,----the Temple's Roof uncloſe;———Thunder, and darting Lightnings proclaim Heaven's juſt Abhorrence of your Mockery of the ſacred Ceremony, and mark the* Bridegroom *for a vile Prophaner!———But, Oh! ſhou'd all the Curſes which my Injuries deſerve, and jealous Fury can invent, fall on you,---ſhou'd Judgments terrify, or even Pity for me diſſuade you from her Arms, what wou'd it avail?---Cou'd it afford one Grain of Comfort to my tormented Soul?———No,———Since you're* mine *no more, no matter whoſe:———Your* Heart *is loſt, for ever loſt to* me; *and when compar'd with* that, *your Body is a Trifle.———Go on then,---purſue the Dictates of your changing Nature; be proud of Perjury, and wanton in Deceit: A Time will come, when Remorſe will be ſufficiently my Avenger.———For me I ſhall not long endure the Pain of Thought; Madneſs or Death will eaſe me of Reflection; but while I have Life or Senſe to know how very wretched you have made me, be kind enough, at leaſt, to feign Compaſſion for the Woes you give, and lay the Blame of your* Inconſtancy *on Fate,----the unavoidable Impulſe of your Nature,---or any thing which may make me think you pity me; for ſince, in ſpite of all you have done, I ſtill muſt love you, I wou'd fain imagine you poſſeſs'd of ſome one good Quality, to juſtify my Paſſion.———O God!*

I can

I can no more!——Farewel, dear, cruel Deſtroyer of the Soul, and Ruin of the everlaſting Peace of

The moſt Wretched

CLEOMIRA.

IN about four or five Days after I ſent, I receiv'd an Anſwer; which I think proper to repeat, that you may ſee there is nothing ſo rude or baſe impoſſible for a Man to do, when once a Woman, by forfeiting her Honour, has put it in his Power to uſe her as he pleaſes.

TO CLEOMIRA.

I Receiv'd your Letter with ſome Surprize, but with none of that Tenderneſs you ſeem to aim at inſpiring, or what really has poſſeſs'd my Soul at reading ſome of your former ones; nor can you blame my Change of Humour, ſince your own Extravagance has been the Cauſe. Believe me, Cleomira! *whatever, in our Days of Courtſhip, we profeſs, the Exceſs of any Paſſion is ridiculous to a Man of Senſe; and* Love, *of all others, more excites our* Mirth, *than our* Pity.—*That fooliſh Fondneſs, with which your Sex ſo much abounds, is,* before Enjoyment, *charming, becauſe it gives us an Aſſurance of obtaining all we aſk; but afterwards 'tis cloying, tireſome, and in time grows odious.—Had your Paſſion, at leaſt the Shew of it, been leſs violent, mine might have had a longer Continuance; and as there is nothing more unnatural, than that a Woman ſhou'd expect a Man can be in* Love *with her always, the beſt way to retain his* Complaiſance, *is, not to take notice of his Alteration, or oblige him, by a troubleſome Importunity, to explain himſelf in the manner I now am forc'd to do to you. I confeſs, indeed, that I am going to be marry'd to a Lady, whoſe Diſcretion will, I hope, prevent any of thoſe Diſcontents and Jealouſies which*

which firſt made my Amour with you grow uneaſy. That I once lov'd you, I ſhall ever acknowledge, and deſire you wou'd be as juſt in aſſuring yourſelf, that your own Miſmanagement was the Cauſe I cou'd do ſo no longer. The little Storms of Fury which appear in your Letter are too frequently met with in Stories to be wonder'd at, and are of as little Conſequence to move me to either Fear or Pity, as your proclaiming the Occaſion wou'd be to the Diſadvantage of my Reputation: But if you can reſolve to confine your Paſſion within the Bounds of Prudence, tho' you loſe a Lover, *you ſhall always find a* Friend, *in*

LYSANDER.

I AM very apt, indeed, to believe that *Lyſander* in this ſpoke the Senſe of all his Sex; and one wou'd think that ſuch an *Eclairciſſement* was enough to have cured me of all Paſſions, but Diſdain and Hate. — Nothing ſure was ever ſo inſulting, ſo impudent, ſo barbarous; yet was my Soul, and all its Faculties, ſo truly his, that tho' at the firſt Reading I reſolv'd not to think of him but with Deteſtation, I relaps'd immediately, and inſtead of wiſhing I had never ſeen him, found a ſecret Pleaſure, even in the midſt of Agony, in the Reflection that he had lov'd me once: And, if at any time a Start of juſt Reſentment rouz'd itſelf within me, when I wou'd give it Vent in *Curſes*, a Power ſuperior to Rage arreſted the flying Breath, and chang'd it into *Bleſſings*. I ſtill lov'd him with ſuch an Adoration, that I cou'd not bring myſelf to think that any thing he cou'd do was wrong, and began *indeed* to lay the blame of my Misfortune on my own Want of Merit to engage the Continuance of his Affection, rather than on any Vice in him; and it was with all the Difficulty in the World, I forbore writing to him again, to tell him ſo. — Was ever any Infatuation, — was ever any Madneſs equal to mine! — O God! the bare Remembrance of it makes me contemn myſelf, and acknowledge, that a Creature ſo meanly ſoul'd deſerv'd no better Fate.

THE

THE poor *Recluſe* for ſome Moments was able to proceed no farther; a thouſand mingled Paſſions now ſtruggled in her labouring Breaſt, with too much Vehemence to be ſuppreſs'd; and throwing herſelf down on the Couch ſhe ſat on, began again to pour out the Anguiſh of her Soul in a Torrent of Tears. Tho' *Belinda* cou'd not forbear ſympathiſing with her, yet finding that her Griefs were indeed paſt Remedy, thought nothing ſhe cou'd ſay wou'd any way avail to her Conſolation, and only bore her company in this dumb Scene of Sorrow: But the *Recluſe* had too much Complaiſance and Good-nature, to be able to endure the Influence ſhe perceiv'd her Afflictions had over the tender Diſpoſition of the other, and compoſing herſelf as well as ſhe cou'd, continu'd her Diſcourſe in this Manner:

IF (ſaid ſhe) I cou'd have found Words of Force ſufficient to have vented any of thoſe various Paſſions which tormented me, my afflicted Soul, perhaps, might have receiv'd ſome little Intervals of Eaſe; but there were none to expreſs a Condition ſuch as mine! — To *love* to the higheſt Degree of Tenderneſs, what I ought to have *abhor'd*; —— to *adore* what I knew deſerv'd my utmoſt *Scorn!* —— to have bury'd *Hope*, and *wild Deſire* ſurvive; —— to have Shame, Remorſe, and all the Vulturs of conſcious Guilt gnaw on my aking Thought; —— to wiſh for Madneſs, and yet Senſe remain, was Miſery! was Horror, ſure, without a Name! A thouſand times in a Day I was about to put an end to Life, and all its Weight of Anguiſh: Nor was it Reaſon or Religion, but merely the Conſideration that Death wou'd take from me all Power of hearing what became of *Lyſander*, that preſerv'd me.

THUS did I live, if ſuch a State can be call'd Life, till the Day of *Lyſander*'s Marriage; but when I heard that, imagine you behold a Wretch in the moſt raging Fit of Lunacy, and it may give you ſome Idea, though but a faint one, of what I then appear'd;

appear'd: I tore my Cloaths, my Face, my Hair, threw myſelf on the Floor, beat my Breaſt, made the Houſe ring with echoing Shrieks and Lamentations, and was ſcarce reſtrain'd by my Nurſe from running in this manner to the Church where the Ceremony was perform'd; and it was but when I had no longer Strength to rage, that partly by Force, and partly by Perſuaſion, ſhe got me into Bed. The Violence of my Agitations threw me into a Fever; but though I would take nothing but what I was compell'd to, and committed Extravagances in this Illneſs enough to have kill'd twenty of a much ſtronger Conſtitution than myſelf, yet I could not die: In ſpite of the Malignity of the Diſtemper, in ſpite even of *myſelf*, I recover'd. But not all the bodily Indiſpoſition I had endur'd, had been able to weaken the Paſſions of my Soul: I ſtill lov'd, and ſtill deſpair'd. —— My Thoughts were always with *Lyſander*, and purſu'd him every where, even to the bridal Bed, that Grave where all my Hopes were buried! My Nurſe's Houſe happening unluckily to ſtand in a Street pretty near that in which *Lyſander* liv'd, as ſoon as I had Strength to walk about my Chamber, I had the Mortification from my Window to behold him and *Semanthe*, now his Wife, paſs by in their Chariot almoſt every Day. You may believe this Sight gave no ſmall Addition to the Horrors of my Deſpair: But I will not pretend to repeat what it was I felt, whenever theſe grating Objects met my Eyes; it ſhall ſuffice to ſay, 'twas more than I cou'd bear, and I reſolved to rid myſelf of what I *then* endur'd, without any Apprehenſions of what Futurity might give. Death was my determin'd Cure: But in what manner I ſhould apply it, was now my only Study; and, after a long Debate in my Mind, *Poiſon* was the Means I fix'd on, as being not only the moſt decent, but alſo the moſt private Way I could perform this Deed of Deſperation; for I was unwilling the World ſhould be ſenſible of what

what I had done; and when I was no more, preſerve my Shame ſtill flagrant with thoſe ſcurril Dities, which Actions of the kind I was about to do, are always Themes for. I took care to conceal my Intentions from my Nurſe; and that ſhe might be the leſs watchful over me, began to counterfeit a Chearfulneſs, which Heaven knows was far diſtant from my Heart. The poor Woman was overjoy'd to find me, as ſhe thought, ſo much more eaſy than I had been; and I went out one Day, unſuſpected, to procure the fatal Drugs. I had recourſe to an Apothecary who had been us'd to make up Medicines for our Family; and becauſe I knew how ſcrupulous People of that Profeſſion are oblig'd to be, I told him, I had a little favourite Dog, which by ſome Accident was run mad, and having made uſe of a thouſand Experiments for a Cure for him in vain, and not enduring to have him deſtroy'd any other way, I wou'd have ſomething to give him, to put an end to his Miſery in the moſt gentle Manner I could; ſomething of a ſleeping Potion, I ſaid, which by Degrees ſhou'd ſeize upon the Seats of Life, and give a ſure, but eaſy Death. The Man look'd on me with a good deal of Surprize, and, as I thought, more Penetration than I deſir'd he ſhould have; but, after a little Pauſe, went about mixing the Compoſition. I was very well pleaſed to think I had ſo artfully deceiv'd him, and came home with the Phyſick, which I deſign'd ſhould make a perfect Cure of all my Miſeries. As I was going to drink it, I began to think I cou'd not leave the World in Peace, without a Farewel to my unjuſt but ſtill too dear *Lyſander*; and taking up ſome Paper, I writ to him theſe Lines:

To

To the Dear Ruiner of my Soul and Body.

AS my Paſſion for you was built on a more laſting Foundation than that of yours to me, ſo not all your Cruelty can have Power to ſhake it: I muſt be yours, tho' you ceaſe to deſire I ſhou'd be ſo; and ſince I cannot hope, *nay, now you are another's, dare not* wiſh *any future Teſtimonies of my Affection ſhould be pleaſing, I take the only Means to rid you of the Trouble: A Draught of Poiſon ſtands before me; and the Moment I conclude this Letter, I take my Journey to that World, whence there is no Return.—What will be my Portion there I know not; but I am ſure of this, that if departed Souls have any Intelligence of what's acted here, your Pity for my Fate will mitigate the ſharpeſt Torments. A tender Sigh ſometimes, not even my Rival wou'd deny; and perhaps, a Time may come, when you ſhall own I merited much more. I do not, however, wiſh you ſhou'd be touch'd too deeply with Remorſe—You are too dear to me, for me to deſire to give you Pain. Remember me, if you can, with ſome little Softneſs;—make not my Sufferings the Subject of your Ridicule, nor ſeem pleas'd if you hear others do ſo; and whenever my Want of Beauty, Wit, or any other Charm, riſes as an Evidence againſt me, let my exalted Tenderneſs ſtill balance that Deficiency, and reflect, that as I have* liv'd, *ſo now I* die, *my Dear, Dear* Lyſander.

Only yours,

CLEOMIRA.

I KEPT my Word, indeed; for as ſoon as I had ſeal'd this up, I drank the Ingredients I had brought home with me: —— I drank it without the leaſt Alarm, or any of thoſe Apprehenſions, which ſo terrify the Minds of moſt People at the Approach of Death,

Death, ſo much had Deſpair hardened my Heart, and ſtupified my Reaſon. In about an Hour, either the Draught *it ſelf*, or the Force of *my Imagination* that it muſt be ſo, operated ſo ſtrongly through my Veins, that I grew exceeding ſick; and fearing the Effects would come before I had ſettled thoſe Affairs I had in my Head, I call'd haſtily for the good old Nurſe. It was almoſt Midnight, and ſhe was in Bed; and believing I had been ſo too, was not a little frighted when ſhe came into my Chamber, and found me dreſs'd as I had been all Day, and with ſomething in my Countenance, as ſhe ſaid, of a Horror impoſſible to be expreſs'd. I ſent for you (ſaid I) to take my everlaſting Leave,———to thank you for the faithful Services I have received from you, and to make what Recompence my leſſen'd Circumſtances have left me Power to do. The poor Creature ſtar'd in my Face all the time I was ſpeaking; but the Aſtoniſhment ſhe was in, made her either incapable of underſtanding me, or took away the Power of anſwering. Be not ſurpriz'd (reſum'd I) I tell you this Night——I know not but this *Hour* is the laſt of my Life:——Therefore while I have Voice to utter the Meanings of my Soul, I charge you be attentive, and perform my laſt Requeſts. She certainly thought my Griefs had turn'd my Brain; and haſtily interrupting me, as I ſpoke theſe Words, for Heaven's ſake, Madam (ſaid ſhe) give not way to the Suggeſtions of your Melancholy: You are now, God be prais'd, pretty well recover'd from an Illneſs in which we had juſt Reaſon to deſpair of you:——You are now, as it were, riſen from the Grave, and the ſignal Deliverance ſhews that you are deſtin'd for happier Days than thoſe you yet have ſeen.——Ah! do not then (continued ſhe, with Tears in her Eyes) endeavour to diſappoint the Deſigns of your all-wiſe Preſerver, by indulging Grief to prey upon your Senſes for the Loſs of an unworthy Perſon, whom, at your Return of Reaſon, you muſt ſcorn. I could not ſuffer her to proceed

ceed in this Manner, but cutting her off from what ſhe was going to ſay, No more (cried I) if by an ill-tim'd and unmannerly Zeal you would not forfeit all that good Opinion your Fidelity and Obedience has hitherto inſpir'd :——Once more I tell you, that I cannot,—will not live:—Death is already buſy at my Heart; and, if I make not Haſte, may rob me of the only Wiſh I now can form, and you of the Glory of ſerving to the laſt a Miſtreſs, who, if ſhe had the Power, would more expreſs her Gratitude ———Therefore, in few Words, by all that Truth and Honeſty which I believe you poſſeſs'd of, I conjure you to deliver a Letter you will find on the Table into *Lyſander*'s Hands, the Moment I expire,—to tell him that his Inconſtancy was my Death, and to relate the Manner of it in the moſt moving Terms you can invent. This is all I have to aſk or to command.——As to my Funeral, order it as you pleaſe; but let me not be laid too near my Parents, leſt my guilty Aſhes ſhould diſturb the ſacred Repoſe of theirs.—All that remains of my broken Fortune, after I am laid in the Earth, is yours. Though I ſpoke this with all the Solemnity imaginable, it was to little Purpoſe; ſhe ſtill took it for the Effects of my Melancholy, and began to reſume her Diſſuaſions from letting ſuch ſad Thoughts get the better of my Reaſon; and I was forced to tell her what I had done, before I could make her believe I was in Danger of Death. But never did Amazement and real Grief appear more lively than in the Face of this poor Wretch, at what I told her. At firſt ſhe was intirely mute, and when ſhe had Power to ſpeak, her Words were nothing but Exclamations. Then, on a ſudden, thinking they were fruitleſs, was running for a Phyſician, for a Divine, and raiſing the whole Town for my Preſervation; nor cou'd any thing I ſhould have ſaid, have prevented her, if my Strength had not prevail'd to force her into a Chair, and holding her there, oblig'd her to hear me tell her, That the Poiſon I had taken was

not of a Nature to be expell'd, or if it were, had now lain too long in me to be depriv'd of its Operation: Nay (ſaid I) put the Caſe that what I had done, ſhou'd by any Means that I ſhou'd be compell'd to uſe be render'd fruitleſs,—not all the World ſhou'd force me to live another Day.——If I cannot die the Way I chuſe, ſtill I will *ſome* Way; If not by Poiſon, there are Knives, or Cords:——My Garters may be my Executioners: — Or if deny'd theſe Inſtruments, you cannot hinder me from ſtrangling myſelf with my own Hands, or daſhing out my Brains againſt the Wall:—To thoſe *reſolv'd*, Death always is at Call. I ſpoke theſe Words with a real Deſign to do as I ſaid; and if ſhe had got Liberty to have brought any Perſon in to reſtrain me, I had certainly that Moment taken ſome unfailing Method to prevent any thing they cou'd have done to ſave me. But with theſe, and the like Speeches, at laſt I perſuaded her to content herſelf with *lamenting* my Deſperation, without endeavouring to do any thing to *remove* it. And having convinc'd her of my Obſtinacy to die, to ſpare the Infamy of Self-Murder, ſhe promis'd me to keep the Deed conceal'd, and give out I died of an Apoplexy. But I thought I ſhou'd never have prevail'd on her to carry the Letter to *Lyſander:* Her Abhorrence to him, as the Author of all my Misfortunes, and now of my Death, was ſo great, that ſhe aſſur'd me the Taſk of dying with me wou'd be far leſs ſevere than the beholding ſuch a Monſter: But my Tears and repeated Entreaties at laſt overcame all her Scruples, and I engag'd an Oath from her (for I would not in that Caſe truſt her Promiſe) that ſhe wou'd in the Morning ſee him, and ſay all that I requir'd. In a very little time after I had brought her into the Diſpoſition I deſir'd, I found a prodigious Heavineſs, like that, indeed, of Death, ſeize on my Spirits; and making no doubt but that the fatal Moment was at hand, with my Nurſe's Aſſiſtance (though, poor Soul, ſhe was in too great an Agony to be able to afford me much

I got my ſelf undreſs'd, and put to Bed, where I had not lain long before I loſt all Senſe of every thing:———*Lyſander*'s Charms, — his Cruelty,— my Ruin and Deſpair were now no more remember'd! — Oh! if one were ſure to enjoy that Tranquillity in a *real* Death, that I did in my *imaginary* one, none would ſurvive their Happineſs! At my return to Thought, that is, when I was loos'd from the Bands of Sleep, for it was no more which had bound down my Senſes, I was in a Conſternation impoſſible to be expreſs'd:——I look'd on myſelf, then round the Room, and I believe 'twou'd have been pleaſant enough, if any Body had been Witneſs of it, to have obſerv'd the Oddneſs of my Behaviour at my firſt waking. I remember'd very well what had paſs'd before I went to Bed, and cou'd not reconcile ſo ſeeming a Contradiction, as that I ſhou'd be ſtill in a World I believ'd I had taken ſuch effectual Meaſures to be freed from. As I was in this Dilemma, my Nurſe came into the Chamber, not with her Eyes o'erflow'd with Tears, and wringing her Hands, as ſhe had done the Night before, but with all the Marks of a moſt perfect Satisfaction; and kneeling down by the Bedſide, teſtify'd her Joy in moſt fervent Thankſgivings to that Divine Power which had ſo graciouſly been pleas'd to diſappoint the unnatural Purpoſe of my Heart. I cou'd not forbear interrupting her Ejaculations by ſome wild ſort of Enquiries, how I came to be ſtill living; which ſhe preſently ſatisfy'd me in theſe Words: When I had left you (ſaid ſhe) in all Appearance dead, I began to conſider of the Promiſe you had oblig'd me to make; and it being near Morning, got my ſelf ready to go with your Letter, reſolving to take no notice of your Death to my Family till my return. After I had diſcharg'd that unwelcome Errand, I found a Man waiting at home to ſpeak with me; and he told me, the chief of it was to enquire if a Lady who lodg'd here was well; and then named *you*. I was too much confounded at the Queſtion to be able

to anſwer him without trembling and faultering in my Speech, though, as well as I cou'd, I ſaid I hoped you were well;—that I left you ſo laſt Night, I wiſh (reſum'd he, taking me aſide) ſhe may continue ſo. Then, Madam, he told me he was the Apothecary from whom you had demanded Poiſon; but ſuſpecting you deſign'd it for ſome other Uſe than what you pretended, and fearing, if he ſhou'd deny, you might procure it from ſome other, he had deceiv'd you with an *Opiate*, which cou'd be no way prejudicial to the Health of the Perſon that took it, tho' it would hold the Senſes in a much deeper and longer Sleep than what was natural.—He ſaid alſo, That he had caus'd you to be watch'd home, to the End that he might relate the Truth to thoſe about you, if any thing of what he imagin'd ſhou'd happen. I was ſo impatient to know what *Lyſander* had ſaid, ſince I found ſhe had been with him, that I cou'd not give myſelf much Time to reflect on what ſhe told me concerning the Apothecary; but I found her willing to evade the repeating the Manner of his Behaviour, and gueſs'd by *that* he was inhuman to the laſt.—What (ſaid I) was he not ſhock'd to hear I died for him?—If I cou'd believe, that after ſo fatal a Proof of Love he cou'd perſiſt in his Barbarity, I ſhou'd rejoice my Purpoſe was defeated, and would live to ſcorn him.—If you are in earneſt (interrupted ſhe) and can, indeed, continue in a Reſolution ſo truly noble, I will inform you of all. Which, after my aſſuring her I wou'd do, ſhe went on in this Manner: I gave your Letter to him (ſaid ſhe) and after looking it careleſsly over:—Your Miſtreſs ſure is mad (cry'd he, with an Air of Contempt) I long have thought her ſo, and the romantic Stuff ſhe has writ me here, confirms it. Indeed, Madam (continued the good Creature) I had ſcarce Power to refrain flying in his Face; but though my Hands forbore any Indignities, I gave my Tongue free Scope; and when I had told him,—nay ſwore (as well I might, for firmly I believ'd it) that you were really dead,

dead, I call'd him every Name I could invent, of baſe, perfidious, and deceitful; but he ſeemed as little to regard the Fury I was in, as the News I brought him, and only ſaying,——If ſhe be dead, the Letter requires no Anſwer, therefore be gone, and ceaſe your Clamour; but not finding I was very haſty to do as he bid me, for methought it was ſome little Satisfaction to upbraid this Monſter, he call'd one of his Servants to turn me out of Doors, and walk'd from me as unconcern'd as though I had brought him an Account of the moſt indifferent Affair that cou'd have happen'd. I was too well ſatisfied in the Integrity of this good old Woman, to doubt the Truth of what ſhe ſaid; and it was now that I began to feel that Reſentment, which by a thouſand Barbarities he had long before deſerved. And, after ſome little Struggles between departing Tenderneſs and growing Hate; — 'Tis done (ſaid I) *Reaſon*, at laſt, has gain'd a Conqueſt over all that *Softneſs* which has hitherto betray'd me to Contempt.—Now I will live, and *Love* alone ſhall die.—Nurſe brought ſo many and well-grounded Arguments to ſtrengthen me in this Reſolution, and expreſs'd her Meaning in a Manner ſo much beyond what could be expected from her, that I have often thought ſhe was that Moment inſpir'd by Heaven to aſſiſt my Weakneſs. In ſhort, I gave the Thoughts of *Death* intirely over. I cou'd not endure, however, to appear publickly in the World again; and as *Lyſander* believ'd me dead, I was willing every body elſe ſhou'd do ſo too: I order'd a *Will* to be drawn according to Law, in which I made Nurſe my *Heir* and ſole *Executrix*; and ſhe has perform'd every thing I deſir'd with ſuch Exactneſs and Fidelity, that not a Relation or Acquaintance has the leaſt Notion of my being living. It was ſhe who heard of the Convenience of this Houſe for boarding in; but I wou'd not let her come to make any Agreement for me, becauſe ſhe might chance to be known, and conſequently the Perſon ſhe recommended gueſs'd at. Since the

time of my being here, ſhe manages my little Fortune, receives the Income of it when due, and gives me an Account of it every Quarter; which is all the Buſineſs I have to do in this uneaſy World. Thus, Madam, have I given you a faithful Account of the Cauſes which induc'd me to this Retirement; and I believe you will own that they are ſuch as merit no leſs than my whole Life's Contrition. For, as Mr. *Waller* very elegantly expreſſes it,

Our Paſſions gone, and Reaſon in her Throne,
Amaz'd we ſee the Miſchiefs we have done!

THOUGH *Belinda* had conceiv'd the higheſt Eſteem and Friendſhip imaginable for this *fair Unfortunate*, and was willing to offer every thing in her Power for her Conſolation, yet ſhe cou'd not diſapprove the Juſtice of her Lamentations, or the Reſolution ſhe had taken of concealing herſelf. So much of the Night was taken up in the *Recluſe*'s Hiſtory, that *Belinda* was oblig'd to defer her's till the next Day; but the other engaged her to come into her Chamber early in the Morning, and as ſoon as Breakfaſt was over, demanded the Performance of her Promiſe; which ſhe readily comply'd with, and ſtruggling with ſome Sighs, which her aking Heart ſent forth on recollecting the Paſſages ſhe was about to utter, began her Relation in this manner.

The Story of BELINDA.

I Cannot (ſaid ſhe) boaſt either of a Family, or any natural or acquir'd Endowments, which cou'd entitle me to thoſe Hopes the lovely and accompliſh'd *Cleomira* might reaſonably depend on: My Father, was, indeed, a Gentleman; and if his Eſtate was not the greateſt, yet it was ſuperior to moſt Commons, who had taken no other Meaſures to enlarge their Poſſeſſions than what was conſiſtent with *Honeſty*, and that tranquil State of Life, which

I believe, he wou'd not have forſook to have been Maſter of both *Indies:* And though my Education was only ſuch as the Country affords, yet, had I follow'd thoſe Precepts which my Infancy was taught, it had been ſufficient to have reſtrain'd me from doing any thing which cou'd draw on me the Contempt of the World. I had the Misfortune to loſe both my Parents within a Year of one another! but my Father (who was the longeſt Survivor) had a little before his Death provided me a Huſband, a Gentleman who long had lov'd me, and who was, indeed, deſerving of a much better Match: His Perſon was extremely graceful and well-turn'd; his Behaviour affable to all, and complaiſant as far as *Sincerity* wou'd permit; his Solidity of Judgment and ſound Reaſoning ſurpriz'd thoſe of twice his Years; and though he had a peculiar Sweetneſs of Diſpoſition, which made it impoſſible for him to be an *Enemy* to any one, yet was it temper'd with a due Regard to that Principle of Honour which forbids any *Friendſhip* with the vicious Part of Mankind, or for any private End or Intereſt to pretend it. *Virtue* and *Wit*, though in Rags, never fail'd to excite his higheſt Praiſes and moſt zealous Eſteem; and *Folly* and *Baſeneſs*, though adorn'd with Grandeur, his Contempt and open Deteſtation. It was impoſſible for a Heart ſo entirely unprepoſſeſs'd as mine *then* was, to make any Objection to a Perſon ſuch as I have deſcribed, eſpecially when recommended by a Father, who I knew tenderly lov'd me, and was moſt watchful for my Happineſs; but as I had no *Repugnance*, ſo alſo I had no extraordinary *Satisfaction* in the Thoughts of this Match: I felt no Hopes, no Fears, no Wiſhes, no Impatience, nor knew what 'twas to be *uneaſy* or *tranſported*. When I ſaw *Worthly* (for that was the Name of this excellent Man) I was well enough pleas'd, indeed; but when I ſaw him not, I was the ſame: In fine, every thing was indifferent to me; and had this Inſenſibility continu'd, I had liv'd one of the moſt contented Women in the World. Every

thing being concluded on, a Day was fix'd for the Celebration of our Marriage; but on the ſudden Death of my Father, which happen'd about a Week before, for Decency's Sake, it was put off for a longer time: Nor cou'd *Worthly* (ardent Lover, as all his *Actions* ſpoke him) ſay any thing to the contrary. He conſtantly viſited me every Day, and I looking on him as a Man ordain'd by Heaven, and him who had the Diſpoſal of me, for my Huſband, allow'd him all the Freedom of Converſation imaginable. The Alteration which the Death of my Father had made in our Family, gave him an Opportunity of proving his Love and Generoſity in a Manner which juſtly render'd him very dear to my *Eſteem* (Oh! would to Heaven it had to my Affection too!) but I have ſince found there was an Infinity of Diſtance between Love and Friendſhip. My Father, little ſuſpecting he was ſo near his End, had made no *Will*; and being poſſeſs'd of ſcarce any *perſonal* Eſtate, and the *real* deſcending to my Brother, then a Student in the Univerſity, it was generally fear'd among our Relations, that myſelf and younger Siſter would be intirely portionleſs. This Diſcourſe ſoon reach'd *Worthly*'s Ears; and he came to me one Day with a more than ordinary Satisfaction in his Countenance, to tell me, That nothing could have happen'd more lucky for his Wiſhes, than this Means of teſtifying to me and the whole World, that it was my *Love* alone he was ambitious of; and that he was ſo far from deſiring my Brother ſhould make good any thing of what my Father had promiſed, that he would not be depriv'd of the Glory of proving himſelf not altogether unworthy my Regard, by marrying me without a Fortune, to receive with me the Treaſure of an Empire. I muſt have been void both of Gratitude and common Senſe, if I had not acknowledg'd this Behaviour to have been generous above the Rank of ordinary Lovers; eſpecially when I conſider'd it could be none of thoſe idle Compliments which Men are often full of, when they think we have no Occaſion

ſion to make uſe of their Service. I knew *Worthly*'s Temper too well to ſuſpect the Sincerity of what he ſaid; and knew alſo, that he was too well acquainted with my Brother's Character to expect any thing from him. He was, when he left our Houſe, extremely wild and thoughtleſs, wholly addicted to his Pleaſures, and ſeem'd ſo little inclinable to any ſolid Reflections for the Good of his Family, or himſelf, indeed, that it was the univerſal Diſcourſe of the Country, that he would make but an ill Uſe of his Patrimony: But he diſappointed the Belief of every Body; and when he came from the Univerſity (as he did ſoon after my Father's Death, to take Poſſeſſion, he being more than of Age) he made it appear that Learning is the beſt Poliſher of the *Principles*, as well as *Manners* of thoſe who apply themſelves ſeriouſly to it. He ſettled the Affairs of the Family in a Faſhion beyond what could have been hoped; and having heard of my intended Marriage with *Worthly*, and what my Father deſign'd to give me, ſaid he would be far from contradicting the Will of ſo good a Parent, though not compelled to it by any Form of Law: And ſending for a Scrivener, not only made me Miſtreſs of the Fortune which had been promis'd, but bound himſelf to give my Siſter the ſame, whenever ſhe ſhould marry, or come of Age. And becauſe there was no ready Money left, he made over the Eſtate to pay it, reſerving only to himſelf a Competency to maintain him at the Univerſity, whither he ſoon went back, and deſigns to continue ſome Years. My Brother's Generoſity did not, however, leſſen my Obligations to *Worthly*; my Eſteem for him encreas'd daily, and he had, indeed, ſo many excellent Qualities, that it was impoſſible, but the more one knew him, the more one ſhould find to admire: In fine, all that I knew of Love was his; nor had I the leaſt Notion, there was any thing farther in that Paſſion, than what he had inſpir'd me with. ——Happy had I been, never to have been undeceiv'd! But my ill Fate decreed it otherwiſe, and ſad Experience ſoon

inform'd me that the Effects of *Love* are not *Tranquillity* and *Eaſe*.

Not having been at any publick Place (except Church) ſince the Death of my Father. *Worthly* would needs perſuade me to go in his Coach to ſee a famous Horſe-Race, which was to be run a few Miles diſtant from the Place where we liv'd. There was a prodigious Concourſe of People, and great Part of them of the beſt Faſhion in the Country round about; The Sight gave us a great deal of Diverſion; and when it was over, *Worthly* conducted myſelf and Siſter (for I took her with me) to a Houſe, where there was a noble Collation prepar'd for our Entertainment; and in this, as in every thing elſe, he teſtify'd the Pride he took in obliging me. As we were returning Home, the Coachman having drank too plentifully, drove in ſuch a furious manner, (in ſpite of his Maſter's often calling to him to take care) that we were over-turn'd. None of us were hurt: But this Accident was the Occaſion of a Miſfortune much worſe than any thing that could have happened by the Fall. A Gentleman, who was riding the ſame way, and ſaw all that paſs'd, came up to us, and alighting from his Horſe, made us ſeveral Compliments on the Occaſion; and perceiving the Condition our Coachman was in, entreated *Worthly* to accept of a Servant he had with him, who, he ſaid, had often drove a Coach, and underſtood it very well. The Fright that my Siſter and I were in, made *Worthly* gladly accept of the Offer; and immediately the young Man, by his Maſter's Command, chang'd Seats with the Coachman. All the time of our little Journey, the obliging Stranger rode by the Coach-ſide, and entertain'd us with a World of Gallantry; for, beſides the Charms of his Perſon, which nothing ſure could ever equalize, his manner of Addreſs had ſomething in it ſo inexpreſſibly engaging, that had *Cleomira* ſeen him, *Lyſander* would have appear'd leſs lovely. The *Recluſe* could not forbear ſhaking her Head and ſighing at theſe Words,

as

as believing it impoſſible for any Man to be poſſeſs'd of Graces, which could obſcure thoſe of her *Lyſander*; but ſhe would not interrupt the other by entring into an Argument, which 'twas probable they ſhould not eaſily agree upon. And *Belinda* went on thus: *Worthly* (continued ſhe) was infinitely charm'd with his Converſation, and gave me to underſtand, when we came near Home, that I could do no leſs, in return to the Civilities he had ſhew'd us, than invite him in. My Complaiſance for him was ſufficient to have made me yield to his Deſire, in a much greater Matter; but, alas! I granted this with a Pleaſure, which, at that time, I knew not the Meaning of, nor once imagined, that from the Wit and Beauty of this lovely unknown, I had drawn in an Infection at my Eyes and Ears, which mixing with my whole Maſs of Blood, was to poiſon all the Quiet of my future Days: I cannot tell you what 'twas I felt, while in his Preſence, but it was a Mixture of Delight and Pain, a Kind of racking Joy, and pleaſing Anguiſh. He ſtay'd not very long at our Houſe, *Worthly* was impatient to have him at his own, that he might, in a Faſhion which he would not take the Freedom to uſe in ours, requite the Civilities we had received from him on the Road; and it was not till I was left alone, and had Leiſure for Reflection, that I found myſelf unhappy enough to feel for this Stranger, what *Worthly*'s conſtant Aſſiduity, and my Knowledge of his many Virtues, never could inſpire. I ſuffered many Conflicts on the firſt Diſcovery that it really was *Love*, which ſo ſuddenly, and without Reaſon, had taken Poſſeſſion of my Soul: My juſt Senſe of the Obligations I had to *Worthly*, and my Engagements to him (from which I could not without both Ingratitude and Diſhonour recede) and my wild Paſſion for a Man, who, perhaps might never regard me with any thing more than an Indifference;——a Man, who 'twas likely might be already married, or prepoſſeſs'd with a more deſerving Object;——a Man, whoſe Temper, Principles, and Cir-

cumſtances, were altogether unknown to me, fill'd me at once with Shame, Remorſe, Confuſion, and Deſpair. My Mind in this Diſorder, 'twould be needleſs to ſay it was impoſſible for Sleep to enter my Eyes: I paſs'd the Night in a manner vaſtly different from all I had ever known before; nor did the Day bring any more Tranquillity. In the Afternoon, *Worthly*, according to Cuſtom, came to viſit me; but, alas! his Preſence was now no longer welcome, nor could all his good Qualities have rendered him ſupportable, had not his whole Diſcourſe been of the too lovely Stranger. He told me, that he had been inform'd by himſelf of all his Circumſtances; that he was a Baronet, his Name Sir *Thomas Courtal*; that having made the Tour of *Europe*, he thought his Travels would not be compleat, unleſs he could be able to give as good an Account of the Kingdom he was born in, as of others; and to that End, was proceeding in his Progreſs thro' every Country in which there was any thing rare or valuable to be ſeen. He added to this Relation ſo many Encomiums on the Graces of his Perſon, the Charms of his Wit, and the ſeeming Sweetneſs of his Diſpoſition, that had I not been already too much prepoſſeſs'd in his Favour, what he ſaid was enough to have made me ſo. Preſuming on my Intereſt with you (ſaid this unſuſpecting Lover) I have engaged, that you ſhall give me leave to bring him to wait on you ſometimes, while this Part of the Country is happy in his Preſence; which I hope (continued he, looking tenderly on me) will be long enough to ſee me bleſt in the Title of your Huſband. O God! with what Emotions did my Boſom ſwell, when he pronounced theſe Words! a thouſand times I was about to lay open all the Weakneſs of my Soul, and warn him of ſo dangerous a Gueſt; but Shame has often depriv'd me of the Power.——Yes, I proteſt, it gave me a Concern I cannot well expreſs, to ſee this generous, this undeſigning Man, thus lay a Snare for the Deſtruction of his own Hopes: Yet, how could I avoid

it,

ſit, without making a Confeſſion too ſhocking for my Modeſty, or his Paſſion, to be able to ſuſtain? In fine, I having ſaid nothing to oppoſe it, he brought him the next Day to viſit me, and they became ſo intimate in a little Time, that he ſcarce ever came without him. O what a Trial was this for a Heart ſo inexperienc'd as mine! How did I ſtruggle to repel my daily-encreaſing Wiſhes? And how ſtrenuouſly did I endeavour to out-balance *Courtal*'s enchanting Graces, by the ſolid Perfections of the other? But all in vain; the tow'ring Flame grew higher by my Attempts to quell it, and a little Time convinc'd me, that Almighty Love deſpiſes all Countroul. *Worthly*'s continual Sollicitations for the Celebration of our Marriage, render'd him more diſagreeable; and the Trouble he put me to in finding Excuſes to delay it, made the Sight of him intolerable: He had too much Penetration, not to diſcover there was an Alteration in my Behaviour; but having never receiv'd Teſtimonies of any thing more than my Eſteem, imagin'd it proceeded only from the little Inclination he had always found in me to change my Condition; and redoubled his Preſſures in ſuch a manner, as made me ſtand in need of much more Artifice than I was Miſtreſs of, to put him off, without letting him into the Secret of my Reaſon for it. To heighten my Averſion, and ſtrengthen my Obſtinacy in refuſing him, I had of late obſerv'd in the charming *Courtal*'s Eyes a certain Languiſhment they were not us'd to wear; I often heard him ſigh, obſerv'd him to look pale and trembling, when, on any Occaſion, he touch'd my Hand: Symptoms which I now began to know were infallible Tokens of a Tenderneſs, far beyond that which Springs from bare Eſteem. And while I flatter'd my fond Wiſhes with a Belief, that I was ſecretly belov'd by him, I began inſenſibly to hate the other, whom I look'd upon as the only Bar 'twixt me and all the Joys this World cou'd give. Tho' *Worthly* was one of the moſt obſequious Lovers that ever was, yet he was too eager to brook a Delay,

lay, for which he cou'd aſſign no Reaſon; and finding me ſtill more and more averſe to any Diſcourſe of Marriage, he ſollicited all my Relations and Acquaintance to ſpeak to me, and learn the Cauſe, if poſſible, why I ſhou'd now refuſe what (if my Father's Death had not deferr'd) had been granted with my free Conſent many Months before. I ſuffer'd a vaſt deal of Perſecution from all thoſe People he had engag'd in his Intereſt; and I know not what the unanſwerable Arguments they pleaded in his Favour might not at laſt have perſuaded me to, if he had not (O ill-directed and unlucky Choice!) employ'd even his ador'd Rival too in this Affair. I was one Day in my Chamber muſing, and full of unſettled Reſolutions, when I was told that *Courtal* was below: His very Name alarm'd me; but when I came down, and found he was alone, 'tis impoſſible to gueſs at my Surprize! He eaſily perceiv'd it in my Countenance; and approaching me with the moſt humble and ſubmiſſive Air, A Gueſt, Madam, (ſaid he) of ſo little Merit as the unhappy *Courtal* wou'd have ſmall Reaſon to hope a Welcome *here*, if his Preſumption were not authoriz'd by him, who, bleſt with the Divine *Belinda*'s Love, knows the way to obtain Pardon for himſelf and me.——From *Worthly*, Madam (continu'd he, perceiving I was ſilent) the fortunate *Worthly*, I am ſent to tell you how much he languiſhes under the Impoſſibility of waiting on you this Evening, and to aſſure you (if you can doubt it) that tho' unlucky Affairs detain him from your Preſence, his Soul and all his Wiſhes are with you. Tho' I was prodigiouſly confounded to find that *Worthly* had engag'd him to this Viſit, yet I was much more ſo at his Manner of telling it me: But after I had deſir'd him to ſit, Any Friend of *Worthly*'s (anſwer'd I) ſhall always find Welcome from *Belinda*: But, I think, ſo much is owing to the vaſt Merits of Sir *Thomas Courtal*, that there can be no need of any ſecond Name to introduce him any where. I deſign'd theſe Words no other than a Compliment;

ment; but the Confuſion with which I ſpoke them, gave him too much Reaſon to believe I had a farther Meaning; and looking on me with Eyes which ſeem'd to read my Soul, ——O God! (ſaid he) what ſweet Enchantment does thoſe Words contain! The powerful Spells diſcloſe an opening Heaven to my raviſh'd View! and wrapp'd with Joys immortal, make me forget the Hell of Miſery I am doom'd to! —Then, after a little Pauſe, and venting two or three Sighs, which ſeem'd ſo vehement as though at each his Heart was rent in ſunder, Pardon, Madam, (reſum'd he) the Violence of a ſudden Tranſport, which ſome deluſive Hopes that Moment fir'd me with, and made me neglect the Buſineſs which alone has given me the Boldneſs of waiting on you. I felt, all the time he was ſpeaking, Motions, which I know not how to account for; I have already told you, that I had diſcover'd, or fancy'd that I had diſcover'd, by ſome Looks and Words, which ſeem'd to be unguarded, that he lov'd me; and though I deſir'd nothing ſo paſſionately as to be aſſur'd he did ſo, yet I dreaded the *Eclairciſſement*, and began to tremble with Fear that he ſhould ſay ſomething which I was altogether unprepared to anſwer. I have often reflected ſince how ſilly my inward Perturbations made me ſeem: *Courtal* muſt certainly gueſs from what Source the Diſorders he perceiv'd in my Countenance proceeded, or believe me to be extremely wanting in Converſation; and I was ſo ambitious of appearing amiable in his Eyes, that I know not if I wou'd not have choſe he ſhould be ſenſible of the Truth, rather than impute my Behaviour to any natural Defect: But whatever his Thoughts were, he eas'd my Confuſion, by immediately falling into a Diſcourſe of *Worthly*. He gave him Praiſes, which, tho' not more than he deſerv'd, were more than I was willing to hear, at leaſt, from the Mouth that ſpoke them; and then began to tell me how ill the Impatience of his Love made him brook my delaying to give him a Happineſs, which he had ſo much cauſe

to

to hope would long ſince have been compleated; and that he begg'd I would aſſign ſome Period to his Sufferings, that he the better might be enabled to endure them. If before I was alarm'd at the Apprehenſion of *Courtal*'s entertaining me in another manner, I was now ten times more ſo, that he did not: —It ſtung me to the Soul to find, that when he had ſo favourable an Opportunity to diſcover his Sentiments, he ſhould employ it in a Theme, which (if he had thoſe Inclinations that I had flatter'd my ſelf I had inſpir'd) muſt be ſo diſagreeable to his own Deſires. My Fears now turn'd to Indignation! I raged to think my Wiſhes had deceiv'd me, and half deſpis'd him for his Inſenſibility! I wonder (ſaid I, with an Air, which I believe had a good deal of Contempt in it) that *Worthly* ſhould take the Meaſures he does:——Does he think to teize me into Compliance?——and can he imagine, that any thing he can ſay, or the Perſons he employs, will influence ſo far, as to make me grant what is not conſiſtent with my Inclinations?—I am not diſpos'd to marry,—at leaſt, as yet; and if I never ſhou'd be ſo, he ought not to expect I ſhould do a Violence to my *own* Humour, to pleaſure *his*. Theſe, and the like ridiculous Expreſſions, which my Vanity, or my Love, or both, drew from me, were ſufficient to let *Courtal* ſee how little real Tenderneſs I had for his Rival; and, doubtleſs, encourag'd him to make the Declaration he preſently did. Ah, Madam! (ſaid he) you are but little ſenſible what the burning Impatience of a Lover's Wiſhes make him ſuffer,——what ſtrong Convulſions,——what Soul-rending Pangs invade the Breaſt, which throbs with doubtful Expectation!—For my Part,——could I, like *Worthly*, hope,—as all, who know you, muſt, like him, *adore*, I ſhou'd be leſs enduring far!——Thoſe lovely Eyes ſhou'd ne'er have Leave to cloſe, or view another Object but myſelf,——nor Night, nor Day would I be abſent:——I'd follow whereſoe'er you went,——and with imploring, dying Looks,——with ſoftening

Tears,

Tears,---with Groans, and all the natural Eloquence of moving Paſſion, hang on your Feet, and graſp thoſe happy Garments, till Coldneſs, Coyneſs, and Reſerve was melted down;----and your whole Soul was Tenderneſs and Pity. You might be miſtaken, (reply'd I, briſkly) for if I did not *love*, ſuch a Behaviour would make me *hate*. True, Madam (reſum'd he, holding down his Head, and ſighing) I know from the Unlov'd all Proofs would be unwelcome; and 'tis that Knowledge has deterr'd me from diſcovering what I feel;----- elſe had my Eyes and Tongue, e'er now, diſclos'd my Souſ, and told *Belinda* ſhe engroſs'd it all;--- but hopeleſs,---meritleſs, I have in ſecret borne the feſtring Wound; nor durſt implore my fair Phyſician's Aid, leſt, inſtead of *Balm*, ſhe ſhould apply a *Corroſive*.—Even this, perhaps (continu'd he, taking one of my Hands, and eagerly kiſſing it) you would think too great a Recompence for the eternal Loſs of my Repoſe. Tho' this Declaration would have prodigiouſly diſorder'd me before, yet being made at a time when I had juſt given over either the Hopes or the Fears of hearing any ſuch thing, it confounded me much more: I knew not what to ſay, nor how to look; I could not *repel*, and was unwilling to *encourage*; but, at laſt, thinking it beſt to take the middle Courſe, I affected to turn his Behaviour into Merriment; and, with as much Gaiety as I could put on, I dare ſwear (ſaid I) there is no Danger of your loſing your Repoſe for any Woman in the World:——You have too much *Wiſdom* to be much in *love*; and moſt of your Sex have too much *Wit*, and too little *Good-nature* not to deſpiſe the Effects of that Paſſion wherever you perceive them.—How, Madam (interrupted he) ſuch Words, coming from a Mouth like *yours*, carry a Severity in them more cruel than any thing I could apprehend from ſo angelick a Compoſition:—While you tell me I have *Wiſdom*, and that I know not *Love*, you give the greateſt Proof you can, that you think me an *Ideot*; for to adore

Belinda

Belinda is ſure the higheſt *Wiſdom*; and to be inſenſible of her Charms, is the laſt Degree of *Folly* and *Stupidity*.———Ah! would to Heaven (continued he, ſighing) it were as much in my Power to influence you to Compaſſion for my Sufferings, as it is to convince you of the Reality of them. I never doubted your Gallantry (anſwered I, ſcarce able to retain any part of that Humour I had aſſum'd) but, if I had, you give me now a ſufficient Teſtimony of it, in ſo artfully turning the Diſcourſe we were upon, which indeed was too ſerious to be pleaſing, into a *Raillery* much more entertaining. ——— He would not ſuffer me to proceed, but falling on his Knees before me, and looking up in my Face with a Tenderneſs unutterable, O hold, (cry'd he) lovely Inſulter! give not to the moſt almighty Truth a breaking,——bleeding Heart, e'er yet ſent forth, ſo injurious an Epithet: — By Heaven, — by all that Man adores,—by all we are taught to hope, to fear, or wiſh, you are dearer to my Soul than Health, than Grandeur, Knowledge, Light, Life, or my eternal Peace; —— than every thing that Language gives a Name to:—But I may ſpare theſe Proteſtations (rejoin'd he, after a little Pauſe) too well do thoſe enchanting Eyes trace their own Power,——— even now they penetrate, they pierce my Breaſt, and read much more, oh! infinitely more, than I can ſay.——He would have gone on, but the Tread of ſomebody coming down Stairs, oblig'd him to break off, and reliev'd me from a Perplexity I know not how I ſhould have got through. It was my Siſter who came into the Room, juſt as he had riſen from the Poſture he was in; but the Confuſion that ſhe perceiv'd in both our Faces, made her (as ſhe ſince told me) gueſs what ſort of Converſation he had entertain'd me with; and, believing it would be a little agreeable to me that he ſhould have an Opportunity to renew it, never left us while he ſtay'd. He could not, indeed, after ſhe came in, expreſs his Sentiments any farther by *Words*, but *Looks*, which I already too well underſtood,

underſtood, explain'd his Meaning; and certainly, tho' at that time I knew it not, met with a Return too kind from mine. Juſt as he was taking his Leave, he got the Liberty to ſay ſoftly,—O divine *Belinda!* remember me:—Pardon, and pity me.———Alas! 'twas I had only need of *Pity*; for never did any Creature paſs a Night in greater Inquietudes than I did the ſucceeding one: ——— My Engagements to *Worthly*, and the Impoſſibility of breaking them, without rendring my ſelf odious to all who knew me; my already furious Paſſion for *Courtal*, and the little Aſſurance I had of the Sincerity of his; — my Ingratitude for the *one*, and Weakneſs for the *other*, ſhock'd all that was noble and generous in me, and made me incapable of Eaſe: I had *all* to *fear*, *nothing* to *hope*; nor could I form an Aim, which, if obtain'd, could give me perfect Happineſs. If I ſhould marry *Worthly* (ſaid I to myſelf) how wretched muſt I be? condemn'd to loath'd Embraces, and the deteſted Taſk of forc'd Civility; —— by painful Duty reſtrain'd from even the Wiſh of better Fortune, yet *Inclination* ſtill at war with *Virtue*, guilty and innocent at once, and miſerable in both:—Or, ſhould I indulge my Paſſion in the too-charming *Courtal*'s dear Society, could I expect Content? Even in his Arms, my Breach of Promiſe, and Ingratitude to *Worthly*, his Deſpair, and the juſt Cenſures of the reproaching World, would embitter all my Pleaſures, turn the dear purchas'd Bleſſing to a Curſe, and make my fancied Heaven a real Hell. In this manner would the different Agitations which tormented me, make me argue with my ſelf. Honour, Reputation, and Gratitude were on *Worthly*'s Side; but what are *theſe* when once oppos'd by Love! *Courtal*'s bewitching Charms ſilenc'd, at laſt, all other Conſiderations; and *Paſſion* had entirely vanquiſh'd *Reaſon* if my Doubts of his Sincerity had not interpos'd: I could not be aſſur'd he lov'd me, becauſe he told me ſo; or if he did, how long his Paſſion might continue. I had heard and read too much

of

of Men's Inconſtancy, their Flatteries, their thouſand Arts, to lure weak Woman to Belief and Ruin, not to tremble when I thought there was a Poſſibility he might not be exempted from thoſe little Baſeneſſes of his Sex.———Theſe Meditations were the troubleſome Companions of my Pillow; nor could my domeſtick Affairs, my Siſter's agreeable Prattle, nor all the Amuſements which the *Day* brought with it, have Power to drive them from my Thoughts: my *Body*, reſtleſs as my *Mind*, diſpleas'd at every Thing, uneaſy every where, I wander'd up and down from Room to Room, till I heard *Worthly* was come to viſit me. I was little prepar'd, and leſs deſirous to have ſeen him; but in the Hurry of Temper had forgot to give Orders for my being deny'd: I receiv'd him in ſuch a manner, as let him plainly ſee he could not do a greater diſpleaſure than in ſtaying with me. He could not forbear taking notice of the more that ordinary Coldneſs, and indeed Peeviſhneſs of my Behaviour; and gave me ſome Hints, tho' with all the Reſpect in the World, that a Paſſion ſo truly ardent and unblameable as his had ever been might have expected a more favourable Return. There was too much Juſtice in his Complaints for me to be able to anſwer them, and therefore endeavour'd to quell them, by telling him, that as there was no body to whom I was oblig'd to be accountable for my Actions, to find fault with what I did, was not the way to engage to a Change. Madam, (ſaid he) I never yet have been preſumptuous enough to find fault with any thing you think fit to do; but now begin to ceaſe the Hope of ever perſuading you to any thing in my Favour.———I well ſee, that in loſing your Father, I loſt my only Friend;—had he liv'd, your *Obedience* to him would have given me a Bleſſing, which I now deſpair of obtaining from your *Love*. He look'd full in my Face as he ſpoke theſe Words, and offer'd to take me by the Hand; which I drawing back with a Reſerve, which came pretty near to Rudeneſs, —I find (reſum'd he)

my

my Preſence is unwelcome,—I will therefore trouble you no farther at this time: May Heaven inſpire you with more grateful Sentiments, or give me a Heart able to ſupport your Cruelty.——He had Power to utter no more; but turning haſtily away, went out of the Room in ſuch Diſorder, that it a little mov'd me: But theſe good-natur'd Emotions laſted not long; and what entirely chas'd 'em from my Soul, was a Letter I immediately after receiv'd from *Courtal.* The Words of which were theſe:

IF to adore without a Poſſibility of Hope be a Sin, it is a Sin only againſt our own Happineſs; a Sin which all Mankind, who ſee you, *muſt be guilty of, and which Heaven, who gave you ſuch reſiſtleſs Beauties, muſt inſpire you to forgive.——Yes, you are too Angelick to condemn us for Faults, which are not in our Power to avoid.—'Tis my preſuming* Tongue, *not* Heart, *that has offended: I need not entreat your Pardon for loving you, but for* declaring *that I do ſo; there is, I fear, a dreadful Cauſe;—I ought, indeed, to have died in Silence. I know not, but your Soul, in ſpight of your Yeſterday's Efforts to conceal it, is wholly taken up with a more deſerving Object, and the Impertinence of my ill-tim'd Paſſion may have diſturb'd thoſe ſoft Idea's which mutual Tenderneſs affords.—Tell me divine* Belinda! *if I have been ſo criminal: Death ſhall be at once the Puniſher of my Raſhneſs, and Cure of my Miſery; but if your Breaſt has any Room for Pity, O give me leave to* try *at leaſt to inſpire it: None ever had a Plea more juſt, none wou'd be more truly grateful than*

Your eternally Devoted

COURTAL.

You may judge with what Tranſports I read this Letter, by thoſe yourſelf has felt at receiving any thing of this kind from the charming *Lyſander*; and

and I thought I had a prodigious Command of my Temper, that I forbore giving any greater Demonſtrations of my Joy, than what the following Lines contain'd:

'*TIS impoſſible either to read, or hear you, without allowing you to be the moſt accompliſh'd, moſt gallant, and witty of your Sex; but whether to be able to retain thoſe Graces, be conſiſtent with a Love ſo ardent as you would perſuade me yours is, can only be judged by thoſe verſed in the Town-manner of Addreſſing. I have often heard ſay, by thoſe more ſkill'd than my ſelf, that the greateſt Symptom of a true Paſſion, is to be depriv'd of Utterance, and Incoherence in Expreſſion; and as I have not Vanity enough to imagine there is any thing in me capable of engaging you to the* Reality, *am unwilling to be made the Property of an* Amuſement *only. However, with that Sincerity, which we in the Country prefer to all Things, I aſſure you that my Heart is utterly unpreposſeſs'd with any Idea of Mr.* Worthly, *farther than his good Qualities inſpire in all who know him; and all my ſofter Wiſhes are at Liberty to extend themſelves wherever they ſhall find an Object deſerving, by his Conſtancy, the Regard of*

BELINDA.

I paſs'd the enſuing Night in infinitely more Tranquillity than I had that before: *Love* baniſhed all the Remains of Gratitude which had ſo much diſturb'd me: I gave a looſe to all the Tenderneſs it inſpir'd; and in return, it flatter'd my fond Wiſhes with a near Proſpect of inexpreſſible Delight. To heighten my Felicity, early in the Morning the aſſiduous *Courtal* ſent me a ſecond *Billet*, in which I found theſe Lines:

WITH

WITH what Words, O moſt Divine Belinda! *ſhall I expreſs the Rapture of my o'erjoy'd Heart, at reading your dear, obliging Letter? Even the Diſtruſt you ſeem to have of my Sincerity, is capable of giving me no Pain, while you vouchſafe to aſſure me there is no greater Impediment to my Hopes!* This *my faithful Services will ſoon remove; but had a Perſon of more Merit taken up your Soul, I muſt for ever have deſpair'd!——Permit me then to begin the pleaſing Taſk of proving what I am this Afternoon; and by giving me an early Leave to breathe out my Soul in Vows of everlaſting Truth before you, convince me (of what is indeed too vaſt a Bleſſing to be eaſily believ'd) that you will not be diſpleaſed to find the moſt* tender, *and moſt* faithful, *as well as the moſt* paſſionate *of all Lovers, is*

Your adoring

COURTAL.

THE ſeeming Sincerity of theſe few Lines ſubdued my eaſy Faith, and I reſolved no longer to diſtruſt my Happineſs: Oh! he is all Angel (cry'd I, in a Rapture) divinely charming in *Soul* as well as *Body!* I muſt,——I will,——believe him. And in this Hurry of unruly Joy, writ him an Anſwer in theſe Words.

'TWOULD be an over-acted Modeſty, and might juſtly be taken for Stupidity, *to feign an Inſenſibility of your Attractions: The proudeſt of my Sex would glory in the Conqueſt of a Heart like yours; and I confeſs, without a Bluſh, to find myſelf that happy envy'd Woman would gratify an Ambition, which, unknowing you, there could not be a Ground for. The Favour of your Viſits, however, I know not, as yet, how to receive:* Worthly, *how ſmall a Part ſoever he had in my Heart, has met with Encouragement from my Father, and, in Obedience to his Commands, from me; and*

and Prudence forbids too ſudden a Turn in an Affair of ſo much Conſequence; but, if I find you in the little Wood behind our Houſe, about Five this Evening, you ſhall know more of the Sentiments of

BELINDA.

You will, doubtleſs, wonder, that a Maid ſo little accuſtomed to Converſation ſhould not ſtart at the very Thought of an Aſſignation ſuch as this; but whether it were, that the Inexperience of the World, and the Baſeneſs of Mankind, kept me from *imagining* the Danger, or the Violence of my Paſſion from *regarding* it, I muſt leave to the Charity of your Opinion: But, I confeſs, I felt not the leaſt Regret for what I had writ, and had no Uneaſineſs but what ſprung from my Impatience for the appointed Hour. At laſt it came, and while I told the Clock, my Soul exulted with a Pleaſure, which till then I never knew. I believe I need not tell you I found *Courtal* in the Wood ready to receive me; you will eaſily imagine, that the moſt trifling Inclination will, before Enjoyment, wing the Aſſiduity of that ungoverned and inconſtant Sex; but I wiſh there were a Poſſibility of informing you in what manner he accoſted me, for there was ſomething in it ſo much beyond Imagination, charming and engaging, that it in Part would juſtify my Behaviour toward him.——All his Geſtures were ſo humble and beſeeching, yet withal ſo graceful;——all his Looks were accuſtomed with ſuch a piercing Softneſs;——all his Words expreſs'd ſo real a Tenderneſs, ſo perfect a Sincerity, and ſo pure a Zeal, that even you, too ſadly ſkill'd in the vile Arts of falſe deceiving Man, muſt have believed and truſted him! I walk'd with him, heedleſs of the ſwift paſſing Hours, till Day was almoſt ſpent; and it was not till the Want of Light depriv'd me of the Pleaſure of gazing on him, that I conſidered how long I had been with him; and that we were wandered, inſenſibly, perhaps, to *either* of us, at leaſt to me I am ſure it was ſo,

ſo, a great Diſtance from the Houſe, and into the thickeſt and moſt obſcure Part of the *Wood*. But it was in vain, that I reminded him how convenient it was that I ſhould return; he was too preſſing, I too tranſported to be able to refuſe him ſo ſmall a Favour as my Company a few Minutes longer. Never was a Night more delectable, more aiding to a Lover's Wiſhes! The arching Trees form'd a Canopy over our Heads, while through the gently ſhaking Boughs ſoft Breezes play'd in lulling Murmurings, and fann'd us with delicious Gales! a thouſand Nightingals ſung amorous Ditties, and the billing Doves coo'd out their tender Tranſports!—Every thing was ſoothing,——every thing inſpiring! The very Soul of Love ſeem'd to inform the Place, and reign throughout the whole. A little tired with walking, my too-dear Companion had prevailed on me to reſt myſelf on a fine graſſy Bank, which was at the Foot of a great Tree: He took the licenc'd Freedom to place himſelf by me; and, methought, we ſat with all the Sweets of Nature blooming round us, like the firſt happy Pair, while bleſs'd with Innocence, they knew not Shame, nor Fear. But he, alas! had other Notions, and aiming only at my Ruin, believed he could not chuſe a fitter Seaſon, and perhaps never ſhould have ſo favourable an Opportunity as this. He now began to mingle Kiſſes and Embraces with his Vows: My Hands were the firſt Victims of his fiery Preſſures; then my Lips, my Neck, my Breaſt; and perceiving that, quite loſt in Extaſy, I but faintly reſiſted what he did, far greater Boldneſſes enſued!———My Soul diſſolved! its Faculties overpowered!—and Reaſon, Pride, and Shame, and Fear, and every Foe to ſoft Deſire, charmed to Forgetfulneſs! my trembling Limbs refus'd to oppoſe the lovely Tyrant's Will! and, if my faultering Tongue entreated him to deſiſt, or my weak Hands attempted to repulſe the encroaching Liberty of his, it ſerv'd but, as he ſaid, the more to inflame his Wiſhes, and raiſe his Paſſion to a higher Pitch of Fury! Oh; I

had been inevitably loſt had not Heaven ſent me a Deliverance, even in the Moment I was about to be made the moſt wretched of its Creatures. *Worthly*, born for my Preſervation! *Worthly*, doomed to do me all manner of good Offices, though to my own Deſtruction! had been to enquire for me; and not finding me at home, happened to come into the *Wood*, not miſtruſting I was there, but to indulge that Melancholy my late Carriage had inſpired. Chance had led him to that Part where we were, and hearing my Voice, he kept himſelf concealed, and was Witneſs to all the latter Part of our Converſation: He heard enough, Heaven knows, to make him ſcorn and hate me; yet, generous to the laſt, when I was on the very Brink of Ruin, he ruſhed forth and ſaved me. Riſe, Villain (ſaid he) and prepare for a different Encounter: ——You ſhall not live to wrong another in the Manner you have done me; nor ſhall that Woman, ungrateful as ſhe is, fall a Sacrifice to your baſe Deſires. The Surprize that *Courtal* was in at theſe Words, and the Knowledge who it was that ſpoke them, did not hinder him from putting himſelf in a Poſture to receive him: He had his Sword out almoſt as ſoon as the other. But what was my Confuſion,—my Diſtraction, to find myſelf thus expoſed! And to the Man from whom, of all the World, I moſt deſired my Weakneſs ſhould be concealed! I had certainly run between their Swords, and received thoſe Wounds each deſigned for the other, but Shame and Horror ſtruck me motionleſs; and without the Power even of endeavouring to prevent it, muſt have been Witneſs to ſome fatal Conſequence, of which myſelf was the Cauſe, if my Siſter, being told by ſome body that ſaw me, where I was, and wondring at my Stay, had not at that Inſtant come with ſome of the Servants in ſearch of me. The enraged Rivals, on the firſt Appearance of the Lights ſhe brought with her, ſheath'd their Swords; but ſhe ſaw enough in all our Faces to inform her, that ſomething extraordinary had happened; but it was in vain for

for her to enquire, we all were ſpeechleſs with our ſeveral Agitations; till *Worthly*, turning to *Courtal*, We are prevented now (ſaid he) but I ſhall take a time more proper to reward your Villany; and giving him a furious Look, flung haſtily away, without ſtaying for his Anſwer. *Courtal* was either leſs diſturbed, or had infinitely more Command of his Temper than any of us on this Occaſion; and ſeeming to take no notice of his Rival's Words, gave me his Hand, in order to conduct me home: But I could not now endure he ſhould look on me, or touch me; and leaning on my Siſter with one Hand, and with the other holding a Handkerchief before my Face, to hide as much as poſſible my Diſorders, made what haſte I could from that unlucky Place. He did not leave us, however, till we got quite to our Door; and as we went, made uſe of all his Rhetorick to perſuade me to think no otherwiſe of what had happened, than as a Matter of no Conſequence. It was wholly improper I ſhould anſwer him as I *would*, therefore forbore anſwering at all: Nor was it to any Purpoſe, that my Siſter begg'd me to make her a relation of this Adventure, after we came home; and only telling her, that I was not in a talking Humour, and bidding her trouble me no farther, I ſhut myſelf into my Chamber, and there gave a looſe to all the diſtracted Emotions of my Soul.——Oh! what did I not endure this cruel Night? and what, indeed, muſt I for ever endure, in the Reflection on the dreadful Conſequence? *Belinda* could not come to this Part of her Story without falling into Agonies, much like thoſe which had ſo often interrupted the *Recluſe* in the Courſe of her's; and it was now that Lady's Turn to comfort; which ſhe did with ſuch Succeſs, that the other was ſoon able to reſume her Diſcourſe in this manner:

THE Shame and Confuſion that I was in (ſaid ſhe) at what happened, was not all that tormented me; I had *Fears*, which were, if poſſible, more alarming even than my *Remorſe*: I knew very well the

Violence of *Worthly*'s Paſſion for me: ——I ſaw the juſt Rage my Behaviour had put him in, and remembred what he ſaid to *Courtal* at parting, and could not hope this Adventure would end without Blood. After a thouſand Inventions how to prevent the Miſchief I with ſo much Reaſon dreaded, I reſolv'd, at laſt, to try my Power once more with *Worthly*, and compos'd my Thoughts, as well as I could, to form a Letter to him, in which I confeſs'd that I had been ungrateful to his Affection, and by my Folly and ill Conduct, had now rendered myſelf utterly unworthy the Continuance of it; but conjured him by the Memory of that Tenderneſs he once had for me, not to publiſh my Weakneſs to the World, by making any Noiſe of this Affair. I writ alſo to *Courtal*, and entreated him, by all the Paſſion he profeſs'd for me, and by thoſe Aſſurances my late Condeſcenſion had given him of mine, to avoid all Occaſions of meeting *Worthly*; and if he ſhould receive any Letter or Meſſage like what his laſt Words imported, to lay aſide his *Honour* in Favour of his *Love*, and the Conſideration how much my Reputation muſt ſuffer in a Quarrel of that Nature. I expreſs'd theſe Requeſts to both of them in the moſt moving Terms I was capable of, and what Effect I might have wrought I know not; for though I went not to bed all Night, it was ſo late the next Day before I had finiſhed, that juſt as I was ſealing up the laſt, I was interrupted by my Siſter's knocking violently at my Chamber-door, and calling me to open it, in a Tone, and with a Diſorder, which told ſomething more than ordinary was the Cauſe, before I gave her Entrance: But when I had, ——O Siſter! (ſaid ſhe) *Worthly* is kill'd —— murdered by Sir *Thomas Courtal*, and his Servants ſay it was on your Account they fought.—— O God! what chilling Horrors ſeiz'd my whole Frame when ſhe pronounc'd theſe Words? If ſhe ſpoke any thing more, I was incapable of hearing it, for I fell immediately into a Swoon, in which I lay ſo long, that, as they ſince told me, neither ſhe nor

nor the Maids that ſhe called to my Aſſiſtance, believed I ſhould ever recover. But my Miſeries were not to have ſo ſhort a Date, and I again returned to Senſe,—to all the Racks of Thought and curs'd Remembrance. As ſoon as my Agonies would give me leave to ſpeak, and to enquire, I received the Confirmation of the diſmal Story. They told me that the Body of *Worthly*, covered with Wounds, and all beſmeared with Blood, was juſt brought by our Houſe, in order to be carried home, his Seat not being above a Bow-ſhot diſtant from ours; and, that a Servant, who was Witneſs to his dying Words, and ſeemed acquainted with the whole Affair, waited to ſpeak with me. As much as I dreaded to hear what the Fellow had to ſay to me, yet I ordered he ſhould come up; and when he did, deſired him to give me an Account of all he knew concerning this unhappy Accident, which he preſently did in theſe Words: Early this Morning, (ſaid he) my Maſter called me up, and giving me a Letter, commanded me to carry it to the Inn were Sir *Thomas Courtal* lay. I found him in Bed; but he immediately roſe, and gave me an Anſwer in writing. At my Return my Maſter was dreſs'd; and as ſoon as he had read what I brought, prepared himſelf to go out, and ſeeing me about to follow him, as was my Duty, he forbid me, with a Peeviſhneſs which he was not uſed to expreſs himſelf with. This Charge, and the Agitations I had obſerved both in his Countenance, and that of Sir *Thomas*'s, while he was reading the Letter, gave me ſome Suſpicion of the Truth. I acquainted one of my Fellows with my Conjecture, and we both thought it our Duty to ſeek him; but in reſolving what to do, we had waſted ſo much Time, that at our Entrance into a Field (not far from hence, and, which we thought, if any thing of what we imagined were true, would be as likely a Place as any for the Scene of Action) we met Sir *Thomas*, who ſeemed to be in a prodigious Hurry. I aſk'd if he had ſeen my Maſter; and he anſwered that he had

not. But we did not put ſo much Confidence in what he ſaid, but that we went on in the way we perceived he came from, and ſoon found my poor Maſter breathing out his laſt. When we came near him, *Harry* (ſaid he to me, with a Voice ſcarce intelligible) I am kill'd:—Tell *Belinda* that I die for her,——and warn her to take care of—He was able to bring forth no more; for at that Inſtant, Death clos'd his Lips for ever. Here the poor Fellow ended his ſad Account, and was juſt going out of the Room half-blinded with his Tears, when I call'd him back, to ask what was become of *Courtal*. You may be ſure, Madam (anſwered he) that I would leave nothing undone for the Revenge of my dear Maſter's Blood; and as ſoon as the Body was carried Home, took Perſons with me to ſearch for him at the Inn: But he was too ſpeedy for my Diligence, and, with both his Servants, had taken Horſe, and, I fear, is gone beyond the reach of thoſe ſent in Purſuit of him; for we could get no Intelligence which Road he took. Though I had all the real Concern imaginable, and Grief for *Worthly*'s Death, and the Cauſe of it, yet, I confeſs, I could not hear that *Courtal* was out of Danger, without a ſecret Joy, which was but too guilty. I diſſembled it, however, and diſmis'd the Fellow with a Belief that all the Sorrow I had been in, ſprung only from the Loſs of his Maſter. All our Family were of that Opinion; and I had the Opportunity of veiling my other Troubles under that Covert, which was both juſt and laudable. I had, indeed, ſo much Anxiety of Mind, with every thing together, that I was not able to ſtay in a Place, where all I ſaw or heard would but put me more in Remembrance of my Misfortunes; and I will not tell you, but the Impoſſibility of ever ſeeing *Courtal* there again, was the chief Reaſon of making it odious to me. I therefore ordered the Coach to be got ready, and the ſame Day went to a Relation's Houſe, about eight Miles farther in the Country, deſiring my Siſter,

if

if any Letter ſhould come, to ſend it to me there; for I imagined *Courtal* would write to me as ſoon as he thought himſelf out of Danger. I gave her ſo ſtrict a Charge to take care of it, that, joined to ſome other little Remarks ſhe had made on my late Carriage, made her not far from gueſſing the Truth of my Sentiments; and ſhe took the Liberty of reproaching me with Ingratitude and Inconſtancy. I gave myſelf but little Concern to perſuade her that I did not deſerve to be taxed with thoſe Vices; but redoubling my Deſires that ſhe would ſend any Letter that ſhould be directed to me, took my Leave. What I did ſoon after, will convince you that nothing, indeed, was able to abate that wild Paſſion that *Courtal* had inſpired me with; for having waited at my Couſin's Houſe about nine or ten Days, and hearing nothing from home, I grew ſo uneaſy, that I reſolved to be gone from thence. I remember'd to have heard *Courtal* ſay he had Buſineſs in *London*, which would oblige him to defer the Progreſs he intended to make through the Counties till next Year, and fancied he might be gone directly thither. I did not doubt but if he were, I ſhould be able to find him out; and when once this Belief had ſettled itſelf in me, I delay'd not a Moment, but borrowing Horſes and a Servant of my Couſin, went ſtraight to *Warwick*, and from thence took the Stage for *London*. It was that Kinſwoman who directed me to this Houſe, having formerly been a Boarder here herſelf; and aſſuring me that if any Packet came from our Houſe, ſhe ſhould ſend it immediately after me, made me pretty well ſatisfied in my Mind, that no Miſtake would prevent the Bleſſing of hearing from him, and knowing where to find him, in caſe I ſhould miſs of him in *London*.

THE Fatigue of my Journey did not hinder me from ſending, as ſoon as I came here, to all publick Places to enquire for him; but no ſuch Perſon was to be found: And what amazed me moſt, was, that a Man of that Faſhion, and ſo noted as I imagined him

to be, ſhould be utterly unknown to every Body. I did not in the leaſt doubt, but that if I had not the good Fortune of meeting with him here, I ſhould be able to get a perfect Account of his Character and Circumſtances; but, alas! the Name of *Courtal* was as little known as the *Arabian* Dialect; and I might have ſpent my whole Life in a fruitleſs Inquiſition, had I not believed my Want of Intelligence was in great Meaſure owing to the Careleſneſs of thoſe I employ'd, and reſolved to be my own Spy in an Affair of ſo much Conſequence to my Peace. I had no ſooner determin'd on this, than an Opportunity offer'd as lucky as I could have wiſh'd: One of the Boarders here happened to have a young Lady, a Relation of hers, come to viſit her: There being a very good Tragedy acted that Night, they agreed to go to ſee it; and having talked of it before me, ask'd if I would accompany them thither: Though I had very little Reliſh for that, or any other Diverſion, as my Affairs were, yet I was extremely pleaſed with the Propoſal, believing no Place more probable to give me a Sight of him, whoſe Preſence was all my Wiſhes aimed at. Neither of them were dreſſed for the Boxes; and I had an inexpreſſible Satisfaction in my Mind, to think, that if I ſhould be ſo fortunate to meet *Courtal* there, I ſhould have the Opportunity to obſerve his Manner of Behaviour, unſeen by him. In ſhort, we all went in a *Diſhabille* to the Gallery, and choſe to ſit in the very Corner of it, where, without being taken notice of ourſelves, we might ſee with Eaſe all the Perſons that came into the Houſe. The Ladies that came with me, knowing me to be a Stranger, were ſo complaiſant as to give me an Account what and who moſt of the Company of any Note were, as they came into their Places; but I had little Ears for their Diſcourſe, my Soul was all collected in my Eyes, and buſily employ'd in ſearch of him, whom the Hope of ſeeing only had engaged my being there. Long I had look'd in vain, 'till the Houſe being pretty full

full, and I beginning to deſpair of being ſo happy, at laſt I ſaw him enter. His Charms were too peculiar, and my Thoughts too full of them, not to make me know him the Moment he ſet his Foot into the Box.———Good God! How lovely did he appear that Night! How graceful! Thoſe Perfections which in the Country, where a *Bon Mien* is a Prodigy, one might think ſhewn to Advantage, were no leſs diſtinguiſhable among a Croud of *Beaux!* Surrounded by thoſe, who by their very *Air* one might perceive made it their Study to attract, he ſhone with a ſuperior Brightneſs, and with an unaffected manly Majeſty aſſerted the Dignity of his Charms, and ſeemed to ſcorn each trifling Emulator. As I was contemplating on his unmatched Beauties, I heard one of my Companions ſay to the other, Couſin, do you ſee who is yonder? Yes (replied ſhe that was ſpoke to) I find that Villain, to his other Vices, has that of being aſhamed of nothing. How unconcerned he looks (reſumed the former) and yet I believe this is the firſt time of his appearing ſince his late baſe Action. They had a good deal more of this kind of Diſcourſe between themſelves, which I but little regarded, not knowing of whom they were talking, nor the leaſt imagining that any thing of what they ſaid was any Concern of mine; till ſome Ladies coming into the Box over-againſt us, I ſaw *Courtal* quit his own, and ſtepping haſtily into that in which they were, ſeemed to entertain them with a world of Gaiety, and with a Familiarity which gave me a Taſte of what (by the little I felt) I believe to be the moſt dreadful of all Paſſions, *Jealouſy!* One of them, though I hated her for the Freedom I ſaw ſhe us'd him with, I could not forbear thinking perfectly agreeable; but ſhe that ſat by her, tho' not the thouſandth Part ſo engaging, appeared to have the greateſt Share of *Courtal*'s Admiration. I perceiv'd he look'd on her with a beſeeching Air, and a Tenderneſs in his Deportment, which made me almoſt mad, while the other often pull'd

him by the Sleeve, patted his Hand, whiſpered to him, and ſeemed, by a World of little Fondneſſes, to endeavour to oblige him to a more peculiar Regard. Judge what my Condition was at a Sight ſo unexpected, ſo fatal to my Hopes! I felt in one Moment all that Deſpair, and Rage, and Jealouſy could inflict; and it was as much as I could do to reſtrain myſelf from giving ſome Proof of it, which would have made me ridiculous to the whole Aſſembly. Not being able to obſerve their Motion any longer with Patience, I turned to her that ſat next me, and aſk'd if ſhe knew who thoſe Ladies were. One of them (anſwered ſhe) is the *Wife*, the other the *Miſtreſs* of that Gentleman that juſt now placed himſelf behind them. —— The *Wife!* (interrupted I, in a much greater Surprize than can be eaſily comprehended): The *Wife* did you ſay, Madam? Yes (reſumed ſhe) that Lady in the green and ſilver Brocade is his *Wife*; but though ſhe is accounted one of the moſt celebrated Beauties in Town, and is certainly a Woman of a very excellent Temper, had a vaſt Fortune, and has not been married much above a Year, yet ſhe poſſeſſes but a ſmall Share in her unworthy Huſband's Affection: I dare ſwear ſhe has this Moment a Weight of Diſcontent upon her Heart, though her Prudence enables her to conceal any Marks of it in her Countenance and Behaviour: That Creature by her, in the flowered Damaſk, who has neither Beauty, good Shape, or any thing to recommend her but a little flaſhy Wit, and a vaſt deal of Aſſurance, ſhe is obliged, for her domeſtick Peace, to be civil to, though every body knows her to be the moſt cruel Enemy ſhe has, and that her Huſband paſſes moſt of his Hours, and great Part of his Subſtance with her. All the time ſhe was ſpeaking, though I liſtened attentively to what ſhe uttered, I had my Eyes fix'd on *Courtal:* I loved with too much Paſſion, not to be aſſured it was he I ſaw before me;——I knew I could not be miſtaken, but I imagined *her* to be infinitely ſo: What ſhe told me

was

was ſo inconſiſtent with the Idea I had formed of his Humour, or the Character I had heard of his Circumſtances, that I could not believe one Tittle of what ſhe ſaid. Madam, you are prodigiouſly deceived (cried I, in a kind of Diſdain) in the Perſons you are talking of: That Gentleman was my particular Acquaintance in the Country, and I am confident has no Wife, or, if he had, is not of a Principle ſo vile to uſe her in the manner you deſcribe. I know not (ſaid the other Lady) what he may have done to entitle him to your good Opinion, but am very certain, there are too many here who know him to be a far worſe Monſter than my Couſin has repreſented him. I ſhould be very much aſhamed (rejoin'd I, more warmly than before) to take the Part of a Man, who really could deſerve thoſe Severities ſome Reports may have exacted from you, but muſt aſk your Pardon, if I tell you, that I cannot recede from what I have ſaid, becauſe I am confident, if Sir *Thomas Courtal* were ſenſible of the Accuſations he lies under, he would find it no difficult Matter to clear himſelf.—Sir *Thomas Courtal!* (cried they both out) for Heaven's Sake, who are you talking of? The Man (anſwered I, more amazed at the Queſtion than at what they had told me of him) whoſe Character you have been ſo free with.—Bleſs me! (ſaid one of them) I know him not: Nor I (cried the other) I thought we had all this while been ſpeaking of my *Lord*——

HERE *Belinda* made a full Stop, as conſidering whether ſhe ſhould name him; and after about a Moment's Reflection,——You will pardon me (ſaid ſhe to the *Recluſe*) if I conceal the real Name of this ungrateful Man; for, I confeſs, in ſpite of the Deceit he has uſed me with, and the Crimes he has been guilty of, I have ſtill a Tenderneſs for him which makes me unwilling to expoſe him. And the *Recluſe* aſſuring her ſhe would be far from deſiring to know any more than ſhe ſhould think fit to reveal, gave her Leave to proceed in her Diſcourſe in this Manner.

IF before (continued ſhe) I thought theſe Ladies were miſtaken, I was now confirmed they were ſo, when they named a Perſon altogether a Stranger to me. I knew (ſaid I) you muſt at laſt acknowledge your Error; that Gentleman to whom you give the Title of *Lord* is no more than a *Baronet*, his Name is Sir *Thomas Courtal*; and, I am ſure, if he were ſenſible of it, would be very ſorry to have any Reſemblance of a Man ſo baſe. Good God! (ſaid one of them) you will not go about to perſuade us, that he, in the White trimmed with Gold, is any other than the Perſon we have named. I am very certain it is not (anſwered I). As we were in this Diſpute, a Woman came to us to know if we wanted any Fruit: Since (ſaid the Lady) we are not able to convince you, let this Woman be the Judge: Theſe Sort of People are acquainted with every body, and ſhe can have no Intereſt in diſguiſing the Truth. When ſhe had ſpoke theſe Words, ſhe beckoned the Woman, and making a Pretence of buying ſome Fruit, deſired her to tell us who that Gentleman was; ſhe immediately confirm'd what my Companions had ſaid, and run on in a good deal of impertinent Chat about him. You ſee (reſum'd the Lady that boards here) how much your Eyes, or the great Likeneſs there may be between two Perſons, has deceived you; but we have ſufficient Reaſons to know what he is, which when we come home I will acquaint you with. At that Inſtant the Curtain drew up, and the Attention I found they were willing to give to the Play, prevented any farther Diſcourſe: But how I paſſed the time of the Performance, cannot be conceived, without being poſſeſſed with Agitations ſuch as mine: I had no Room to hope there was a Probability of ſo many Perſons being miſtaken, and his Behaviour to the Ladies that ſat in the Box with him, confirmed the Character I heard of him to be too true. But preſently after I received a Demonſtration, which took from me all Poſſibility of doubting the Reality of my Misfortunes: When the Play was done, having

no

no Servant there to provide us a Coach, we were oblig'd to wait at the Door for one to come to us, which it could not do immediately, being hindred by a Chariot which ſtood ready for its Owner's Approach. I obſerv'd there were two or three Footmen belonging to it; and one of them, tho' now in a different and much richer Dreſs, I perfectly remembered to be the Man that officiated in the Place of poor *Worthly*'s Coachman, that fatal Day in which I firſt beheld the perjur'd *Courtal*, and ſince had been the Bearer of thoſe *Billets* I receiv'd from him. I pull'd my Hood as forward as I could, to prevent his ſeeing my Face, and changing my Voice, aſk'd him to whom that Chariot belong'd; and he had no ſooner told me (as I fear'd he would) the Name which had given me ſuch Confuſion, than I perceiv'd him coming, the Lord, or *Courtal*, or both, for both indeed were one. He conducted the Ladies he had been with, into the Chariot; and ſtepping haſtily into a Chair which ſtood there, depriv'd me of the Opportunity of ſpeaking and upbraiding him, as elſe I ſhould have done in the diſtracted Condition I then was, without any Regard how improper it was I ſhould do ſo in ſuch a Place, and before the Company I had with me. After this we got into a Coach; and the Lady who came to viſit her that lives here, ſat us down, it being in her Way home. One would imagine, that to find myſelf thus cruelly deceiv'd, had been ſufficient to have made me forego all the Tenderneſs which had led me into ſuch Misfortunes; and if I could not think of him with Hatred, to endeavour not to think of him at all: But in ſpite of the juſt Rage I was in, the Impatience, the jealous Curioſity of a Lover ſtill remain'd; I remember'd that one of the Ladies told me, they had particular Reaſons to know who the Perſon was whom I affirm'd to be Sir *Thomas Courtal*, and had hardly Patience to ſtay till Supper was over, for the Performance of the Promiſe ſhe made me to acquaint me with them. I was beginning to ſtretch my Invention

vention to form a Story to make her believe, that it was wholly on the Account of a Friend, and not of any farther Conſequence to me, which had made me ſo inquiſitive, leſt by giving her Occaſion to ſuſpect the Truth, I ſhould expoſe myſelf to the Ridicule of the whole Family. But I might have ſpar'd myſelf that Trouble: The Averſion ſhe had to him kept her from regarding any thing but the Pleaſure it gave her to have an Opportunity of telling a Story ſo much to his Diſadvantage; and I had little Occaſion for Entreaty to engage her to ſatisfy my Curioſity, and make me ſenſible, that the Man I had conſider'd as ſo worthy Adoration, that all I could do for him was rather a Merit than a Fault, was indeed the moſt vile, and moſt perfidious of his Sex.

SHE illuſtrated the Hiſtory ſhe gave me with many Circumſtances, which aggravated the Foulneſs of the Fact: But ſo much Time has been taken up in the recounting of my own Affairs, that I will not detain your Attention in relating the Particulars of this, and ſhall only, by giving you the Heads of what ſhe told me, let you ſee that I am not the only Woman whom his Artifices have render'd miſerable. The Siſter of that Lady who came to viſit her that lodges here, tho' for a very different Reaſon, is as unhappy as myſelf, and ſuffers as much in the not loving him, as I do in the loving him too well. She is, it ſeems, one of the moſt agreeable Women in Town: Her Accompliſhments are ſuch as cannot fail of attracting a great Number of Admirers; but among the reſt, there was a young Man of Quality, who profeſs'd the higheſt Eſteem for her, and ſhe thought herſelf no leſs happy in his Addreſſes, than he did in her Acceptance of them. They long had lov'd each other with a moſt violent, though pure Affection; but either through Diſparity of Birth, or ſome other Reaſon, both thought convenient to keep their Amour a Secret. That Villain (for I ſhall henceforth call him by no other Name) being an intimate Friend of

of the Lovers, was the only truſted Perſon. He convey'd Letters between them, and through his means they had frequent Opportunities of meeting. He continu'd faithful for ſome time; but *Miranda* was, it ſeems, too *charming*, not to be capable of making an Impreſſion on any Heart, much more on one ſo amorous as his; and he is too *baſe* not to make uſe of any Means, which might give him the Gratification of his Wiſhes, and too *artful* to be at a Loſs to find them. As by his Contrivance they had often *met*, ſo by his Contrivance they were at laſt intirely *parted*; both having a Confidence in his Sincerity, yielded an implicite Faith to what he ſaid: And he ſoon form'd a Stratagem to make each appear to the other more worthy of *Hate* than *Love*, till, if they could not entertain a *real* Averſion, they feign'd at leaſt ſo to do; and keeping their Reſentments ſtill warm, by new Inventions, prevented either from endeavouring an *Eclairciſſement*. The *Lover*, though he imagin'd he had beſtow'd his Heart on a Perſon altogether unworthy of the preſent, was too truly touch'd with the Paſſion he had profeſs'd, to be able to withdraw it; and finding it impoſſible to continue in the ſame Climate with her, without continuing to adore her; and having too great a Spirit to avow it, after what he ſuppos'd he knew of her Ingratitude, reſolv'd to put it out of his Power to do any thing below the Dignity of that Reaſon which all People ought to make uſe of in an Affair of that Kind, when they find themſelves ill treated, without a juſtifiable Cauſe, by the Perſon who once has flatter'd them with a Shew of Tenderneſs. In ſhort, to the Amazement of the whole Town, and the great Grief of all his Friends and Acquaintance (but he whoſe Arts had occaſion'd him to do it) he went to travel; and the Lady, though her very Soul went with him, believing herſelf injur'd by his Ingratitude, and the Inſinuations of his faithleſs Friend, ſcorn'd to make any Trial of her Power to prevent him.

THE belov'd Rival once remov'd, this common Deceiver of them both,—nay, of the whole World, thought there was no Obſtacle remaining to his Wiſhes, and doubted not the Influence of his too-often ſucceſsful Charms. In a very few Days he declar'd himſelf her Lover; and made no Scruple to let her know, he hoped ſhe would reward his Paſſion. But, *this once*, he found his Deſigns fruſtrated: However ſhe had diſguiſed it, ſhe ſtill retain'd too great a Tenderneſs for her abſent Lover, to entertain the leaſt Thought of putting any other in his Place; and beſides, was a Woman of too much Honour and Diſcretion, not to look on all Attempts made upon her Virtue with the utmoſt Contempt; and that this was ſo, there was no Room to doubt, ſince ſhe knew him to be married. The Lady, who gave me this Account, told me, that nothing could be more enrag'd than ſhe was at the Declaration he made her, that ſhe rejected all his Offers, and forbad him ever to viſit her any more: But, as it is the Nature of that ungrateful Sex ſtill to purſue what flies them, he redoubled his Efforts. Deny'd the Liberty of ſpeaking, he writ to her in the moſt moving and *ſeeming* ſincere Strain that ever Heart dictated; but after the Receipt of the firſt Letter, the known Character on the Superſcription prevented her from reading what the next contain'd, and ſhe immediately ſent it back unopen'd. Yet ſtill undaunted he went on; and to make her ſenſible how capable he was to make even Contradictions join, and, by the Effects of his too powerful Wit, dreſs the fouleſt Vice in the Beauties of the faireſt Virtue, he ſent long Epiſtles to argue down her Honour, and to perſuade her, that to a Paſſion ſo ſublime as his, to be cruel only was a Crime. But whether it was owing to her good Senſe, or the Prepoſſeſſion of *another* Idea, which made her inſenſible of *his* (I muſt ſay) unmatch'd Perfections, I know not; but as excellent a Logician as he is, all his Sophiſtry here prov'd vain. And tho' ſhe could not avoid receiving ſome of his Letters

ters, becauſe he either diſguis'd his Hand, or got ſome other Perſon to direct them, yet they had no other Effect on her, than what was very different from his Expectations: She hated him ſtill more; ſhun'd him as a Monſter; and if, by chance, ſhe ſaw him at any publick Place (as he took all Opportunities of being where ſhe was) her very Countenance diſcover'd the ſecret Diſdainings of her Soul; and though where'er ſhe turn'd, he follow'd her with Eyes trembling with Tenderneſs, and all the Languiſhments of deſpairing Love (Looks, Heaven knows, he is too well us'd to wear) a ſtern Severity only ſhone in hers; and if, to avoid being taken notice of, ſhe was oblig'd to anſwer the Civilities he paid her, Scorn lighten'd in her Glances; whene'er ſhe ſpoke, proud Indignation triumph'd in her Accents, and haughty Deteſtation ſparkled in her Air. Such a Deportment, had his Paſſion been of that kind which is worthy of the Name of *Love*, muſt have reduc'd him to a Condition juſtly meriting Compaſſion; but Love is a Flame too bright, too pure, to blaze in a Heart ſo full of Fraud and vile Hypocriſy. As Affairs were in this Poſture between them, there came an Account that the Ship in which the poor, unfortunate, deluded Lover embark'd, was caſt away, and all on board it loſt; and at the very ſame time, his equally-deceiv'd Miſtreſs receiv'd a Letter, which he had writ to her from a Sea-port Town, where they happen'd to put in. That unhappy Gentleman, tho' he had been made to believe her infinitely undeſerving of it, ſtill retain'd the ſame Tenderneſs he had ever profeſs'd, and had not the Power to forbear letting her know it, tho' he had the Power to leave her. In this Teſtimony of his continu'd Faith, there was ſome little Mixture of Upbraidings, which made her no Stranger to the Cauſe of his Departure; and that it was not *his* Want of Love and Truth, but the ſeeming Reaſons he had to doubt of *hers*, which had depriv'd her of her Lover. Had it been poſſible to have recall'd him, with what a

Tranſport

Tranſport muſt ſhe have welcom'd an *Eclairciſſement*; but, alas! he was now irrecoverably loſt. She found his Faith, his Conſtancy, his Tenderneſs, but found at the ſame time ſhe was paſt the Poſſibility of receiving any Benefit of his Virtues; and, if one rightly conſiders her Condition, I know not if it were not leſs Miſery to have believed him *falſe*, than know him *true*, and know him loſt for ever. I will not go about to make any Repetition of what I was told concerning the Surpriſe, Deſpair, and Rage, which ſeiz'd the Heart of this unfortunate Lady at ſo unexpected a Cataſtrophe; 'tis eaſy for you to imagine ſhe muſt be tranſported with an uncommon Fury: But while ſhe was venting the Anguiſh of her Soul in Curſes on the hated Author of her Miſeries, he was contriving Means to gratify his Deſires on her; and finding it vain to proſecute his lawleſs Suit by thoſe Ways he had began it in, he had the unbounded Impudence to reſolve on others, yet more impious, and ſeek by *Force* to obtain what he was now convinc'd Entreaties would for ever fail to give him. Opportunity was all he wanted to perpetrate his Deſign; and none for a long time offering, he grew deſperate enough to deſpiſe all Conſiderations; and knowing ſhe very often went to Evening-Prayers, he waited at the Church-Door with a Hackney-Coach, and was about to ſeize and drag her violently into it. The Action was ſo ſudden, that tho' there were many People coming out at the ſame time, the Surprize it gave 'em would have prevented her receiving any Aſſiſtance, if two Gentlemen, that were paſſing by, had not had Preſence enough of Mind to draw their Swords in her Defence, juſt as he had ſo far compaſs'd his Intent, as to be getting into the Coach himſelf, after having thruſt her into it. He wanted not Courage to engage with them both; but a Croud of People immediately coming about them, put a ſtop to any Miſchief either to him or them. Had ſuch a Piece of Villany been attempted by a meaner Man,

Man, he certainly had been ſecur'd; but his Quality made every body unwilling to create to themſelves ſo powerful an Enemy; and he had the Liberty of retreating, venting ten Thouſand Curſes on his ill Fortune, and the Gentlemen who had fruſtrated his Deſign; while *Miranda*, though half dead with the Fright, was ſafely conducted Home by her Deliverers. Such an Attempt on a Lady ſo much diſtinguiſh'd as *Miranda*, and made by ſuch a Perſon, muſt certainly occaſion a great deal of Diſcourſe in the World; and her Brother, who is a Colonel, would have been ſuſpected to have but little Regard to the Honour of his Family, if he had not reſented it in the manner he did. The next Day he ſent a Challenge to the intended Raviſher; which being anſwered, as he expected it would, they met in that Field behind *Montague-Houſe*, ſo famous for Duels: But, in ſpite of the Juſtneſs of his Cauſe, the Brother had the worſt of it; and the other leaving him wounded, and, as he thought, dead, made his Eſcape; nor durſt appear in Town, 'till he heard, contrary to every Body's Expectation, that his Antagoniſt was out of Danger; and that Night which ſhew'd him to me at the *Play-Houſe*, was the firſt of his being ſeen ſince the Time he fought.

Belinda had no ſooner finiſh'd this little Hiſtory, than ſhe obſerv'd an exceſſive Paleneſs in the Face of the *Recluſe*; and before ſhe could have Time to ask if ſhe were ill, ſaw her fall fainting on the Couch: But there was no Occaſion to call in any Body to her Aſſiſtance, her Spirits were not above a Moment abſent; and at their Return, O Madam! ſaid ſhe, (looking on *Belinda* with Eyes ſtreaming with Tears) how ſtrangely has Fortune brought together two Wretches, fit only for the Society of each other? We are, indeed, too nearly ally'd in our Misfortunes, and to one fatal Source owe both our Woes! I might from the very beginning of your Story have imagin'd it,—— might have known that ſuch prodigious *Charms*, and ſuch prodigious *Villany*, were no where blended

but

but in my perfidious, but ſtill dear *Lyſander!*—Your *Courtal*,—my *Lyſander* are the ſame; and both are found only in the Perſon of the too-lovely faithleſs *Bellamy*. The Surpriſe that *Belinda* was in at theſe Words, took from her, for ſome time, the Power of anſwering; nor could ſhe, for a long while, bring out any more than——Good God! is it poſſible?—Tho' loſt to all the World, reſum'd the *Recluſe*, and wholly regardleſs of every thing that paſs'd, this laſt Action of the inconſtant *Bellamy*, in ſpite of me, reach'd my Ear: And I ſuppoſe it was in the time of his abſconding that he went to *Warwick*, and took on him that borrow'd Name of *Courtal*, to prevent his being apprehended, if any Account of what he had done, ſhould be brought down. Yes, ſaid *Belinda*, (now a little recover'd from her Amazement) that was certainly the Motive which induc'd him both to take that Journey, and to diſguiſe his true Quality; for, by the Account which the Lady gave me, I found it was not many Days after the Accident, that we had the ill Fortune to be overtaken by him on the Road.

Theſe fair Companions in Affliction paſs'd ſome time in bewailing their ſeveral Misfortunes, ſometimes exclaiming againſt the *Vices*, ſometimes praiſing the *Beauties* of their common Betrayer, till the *Recluſe* being deſirous to know if there was any thing more to be heard of her *Lyſander*, entreated *Belinda* to finiſh the remaining Part of her Story. Alas, Madam, reply'd that dejected Lady, I have nothing farther to relate, unleſs I confeſs I am weak enough to retain ſtill in my Soul a ſecret Tenderneſs for this unworthy Man; and that not the Knowledge of his unexampled Perfidy and Inhumanity to you, his baſe Deſign on *Miranda*, nor the Miſeries he has brought on my ſelf, can bring me to conſider him as I ought. Tho' I reſolve never to ſee him more, I neither can forget nor remember him as a Woman govern'd by Reaſon would do. Has he then not ſeen you ſince you came to Town? (interrupted the

Recluſe

Recluſe ſomewhat haſtily). No, on my Honour (anſwer'd the other) he knows not of my being here, nor, I dare ſwear, thinks my Preſence worth a Wiſh; but was I ſure he did, nay, was I convinc'd that, tho' falſe to my Sex beſide, to me he would be true, nay, did his Life depend on my granting him one Interview, I proteſt, by all that I adore, I never would conſent: No, Madam (continu'd ſhe, with the moſt reſolute Air) I own much more than ſuch a Self-denial to the Memory of poor *Worthly*,— to the Friendſhip I have already conceiv'd for you,— and to the Juſtice of revenging, as far as in my Power, the little Regard he has hitherto paid our Sex. The *Recluſe* ſeem'd perfectly pleas'd with this Aſſurance, and omitted nothing to ſtrengthen her in this Reſolution.

THERE grew ſo entire a Friendſhip between theſe Ladies, that they were ſcarce a Moment aſunder: *Belinda* quitted her Chamber, being deſir'd by the *Recluſe* to take Part of her Bed. Their common Misfortunes were a Theme not to be exhauſted, and they ſtill found ſomething for which to condole each other. In this melancholy Entertainment did they paſs ſome Days till *Belinda* receiv'd Letters from the Country, which brought an Account that *Worthly*'s Wounds, having been ſearch'd by an able Surgeon, were found not mortal; that his greateſt Danger had been Loſs of Blood; that he was now perfectly recover'd, and with new *Life* had entertain'd new *Wiſhes*: *Belinda*'s Siſter had expreſs'd ſo tender a Concern for his Misfortunes, and ſo high an Eſteem for his Virtues, that he found it no Difficulty to tranſmit to her all the Affection he had bore her Siſter. The Wedding-day was appointed; and ſoon after *Belinda* receiv'd an Account that it was ſolemnized, to the general Satisfaction of all Friends on both Sides, and the laſting Happineſs of the married Pair. Tho' *Belinda* was far from envying her Siſter that good Fortune, which ſhe was incapable of poſſeſſing herſelf, yet the Cauſe which render'd her

ſo,

ſo, made her unwilling to behold it; and, in a ſhort time, both their Reſolutions of abandoning the World continuing, the *Recluſe* and ſhe took a Houſe about ſeventy Miles diſtant from *London*, where they ſtill live in a perfect Tranquillity, happy in the real Friendſhip of each other, deſpiſing the uncertain *Pleaſures*, and free from all the *Hurries* and *Diſquiets* which attend the Gaieties of the Town: And where a ſolitary Life is the Effect of *Choice*, it certainly yields more ſolid Comfort than all the publick Diverſions which thoſe who are the greateſt Purſuers of them can find.

THE

THE
INJUR'D HUSBAND:
OR, THE
Miſtaken Reſentment.
A
NOVEL.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Right Honourable the

Lady *H O W.*

MADAM,

DEDICATIONS are become ſo ſcandalous of late, that, if Modeſty were not a Virtue too little faſhionable, both the PATRON and WRITER wou'd be out of Countenance. The Reaſon of this is evident: The Preſs is ſet to work only to gratify a mercenary End; and He or She, who is look'd on as a Perſon moſt likely to ſerve that Purpoſe, is addreſs'd; and fulſome Praiſes, and undeſerv'd Encomiums, generally anſwer the Deſign they are given for.

BUT I, MADAM, propoſe to myſelf a nobler Advantage, by entreating the Protection of a Lady qualified like You. The Subject of the Trifle I preſume to offer, is, *The Worſt of Women*; and while I treat of the Inadvertencies, and indeed Vices, which there is a Poſſibility that *our* Sex may be guilty of, I wou'd put thoſe of the *other* in Mind, that there is *One* among

us whoſe *Virtues* may attone for the *Miſmanagement* of the reſt.

To particularize what they are, or enter into a Detail of thoſe Perfections, which, while they attract the Admiration of *all*, are to be deſcrib'd by *none*, wou'd only prove me guilty of a Self-ſufficiency of Thought, and juſtly render me unworthy of your Favour: Of two Evils, therefore, I will chuſe the leaſt, and rather confeſs my Inability to ſpeak of You, as You deſerve, than by enervate Praiſes *leſſen* the Worth I wou'd *proclaim*. The Sun by his own Rays can only be deſcrib'd; and while the moſt *Abject* of created Beings receive the Benefit of his Influence, the *Nobleſt* are at a Loſs for Means to repreſent him: The ſame Misfortune is the Fate of all who contemplate the Character of Your Ladyſhip. Then why ſhou'd I lament the Want of that which the moſt eminent diſtinguiſh'd Genius's wou'd find themſelves deficient in, though not in ſo far diſtant a Degree, as,

MADAM,

Your Ladyſhip's

Moſt Devoted,

Moſt Faithful, and

Obedient Servant,

ELIZA HAYWOOD.

PREFACE.

TROUBLING the Reader with any thing of this kind, is generally ſo little to the Purpoſe, that I have often thought the Authors made uſe of ſuch Introductions more to ſwell the Bulk of their Book, than any other Reaſon: And how ſenſible ſoever I am of the many Faults the following Sheets are full of, I ſhou'd rather commit myſelf and them to the Good-nature of the World, than add to them by an impertinent Apology.

IT is not, therefore, to excuſe my Want of Judgment in the Conduct, or my Deficiency of expreſſing the Paſſions I have endeavour'd to repreſent, but to clear myſelf of an Accuſation, which, I am inform'd, is already contrived and prepared to thunder out againſt me, as ſoon as this is publiſh'd, that I take this pains.

A Gentleman, who applies the little Ingenuity he is Maſter of to no other Study than that of ſowing Diſſention among thoſe who are ſo unhappy, and indeed unwiſe, as to entertain him, either imagines, or pretends to do ſo, that tho' I have laid the Scene in Paris, I mean, that the Adventure ſhou'd be thought to have happen'd in London; and that in the Character of a French Baroneſs, I have attempted to expoſe the Reputation of an

Engliſh *Woman of Quality. I ſhou'd be ſorry to think the Actions of any of our Ladies ſuch as cou'd give room for a Conjecture of the Reality of what he wou'd ſuggeſt. But ſuppoſe there were indeed an Affinity between the Vices I have deſcribed, and thoſe of ſome Woman he knows (for doubtleſs, if there be, ſhe muſt be of his Acquaintance) I leave the World to judge, to whom ſhe is indebted for becoming the Subject of Ridicule, to* me *for drawing a Picture, whoſe Original is unknown, or to* him *who writes her Name at the Bottom of it.*

HOWEVER, if I had deſign'd this as a Satire on any Perſon, whoſe Crimes I had thought worthy of it, I ſhou'd not have thought the Reſentment of ſuch a one conſiderable enough to have obliged me to deny it. But as I have only related a Story, which a Particular Friend of mine aſſures me is Matter of Fact, and happen'd at the time when he was in Paris, *I wou'd not have it made uſe of as an Umbrage for the Tongue of Scandal to blaſt the Character of any one, a Stranger to ſuch deteſted Guilt. I hope there is not a ſecond* De Tortillée *in the World; but if there be, ſhe certainly is not without a* Du Lache *to adviſe and aſſiſt her; and he, that* Du Lache, *who is moſt ſenſible of the Secrets of her Soul, is beſt able to point her out. For my Part (I thank Heaven) I can ſolemnly proteſt a Wretch ſo vile never yet reach'd the Obſervation of*

ELIZA. HAYWOOD.

THE

THE

INJUR'D HUSBAND:

OR, THE

Miſtaken Reſentment.

THE Viciſſitude of all Human Affairs is ſo abſolutely neceſſary to give Mankind a true Notion of themſelves, that he who *ſeems* moſt fix'd in Happineſs, and fenc'd from every Blaſt of adverſe Fate, ſooner or later, is generally led by ſome unavoidable Impulſe to quit his Haven of Peace, and ſhare the Storm in common with thoſe born under leſs auſpicious Influences. The Baron *de Tortillée*, till he was about the Age of Fifty, had paſs'd his Time in a perfect Tranquillity; and though the Sweetneſs of his Diſpoſition made him commiſerate, and, to the Utmoſt of his Power, aſſiſt all who labour'd under any Affliction, yet he himſelf was wholly inſenſible what it was to be uneaſy: He had from his Infancy been bred at Court, and ſtill continued to frequent it; but as he had preſerv'd his Soul untainted with any of thoſe

modiſh Vices, which few of the *gay* Part of it are free from, ſo he alſo did from that Spirit of Faction, which the *graver* Sort, and thoſe who aim at being thought *Politicians* are ſo much ſway'd by. He was entirely contented with his Lot, had no ambitious Views, and enjoy'd the Goods of Fortune in that Medium which alone can make Life happy; neither maintaining a Port greater than his Eſtate would conveniently allow, nor below what was becoming his Quality, This Manner of Behaviour made him unenvy'd by his Equals, eſteem'd by thoſe of a ſuperior Rank, and infinitely belov'd by his inferiors; in fine, never was a Man more univerſally ſpoke well of. Thus he *liv'd*, and thus, in all Probability, had he *died*, had not his ill Fortune introduc'd him to the Acquaintance of Madamoiſelle *La Motte*, in whoſe Converſation he found Charms ſufficient to make him wiſh to change his Condition, if by it he cou'd obtain her for a Wife. This was a Lady of none of the meaneſt Families in *France*, and at the Death of her Father, was left Miſtreſs of a conſiderable Fortune; but tho' ſhe wanted not Wit, ſhe had been extreamly deficient in her Conduct; and the Extravagance of her Expences reduced her in a ſhort Time to have nothing of the Woman of Faſhion remaining but a few rich Cloaths: With theſe, however, and a tolerable Face and Air, ſhe found Means for a good while to eſcape that, by the Young and Proud, dreaded Evil, the Shew of Poverty. Thoſe on whom before ſhe had beſtow'd her Favours *gratis*, were now oblig'd to *purchaſe*; and as ſoon as one grew weary of the Bargain, ſhe ſtill had the Addreſs to gain another *Bidder*: Sometimes three or four had an equal Share in the Property; but ſhe had Artifice enough to make each believe himſelf the ſole Poſſeſſor. Don *Philip d'Eſperanz*, a *Spaniard*, was the laſt that ſupported her in this Manner: But he being ſoon to return to his own Country, where he had a Wife and Family, ſhe was beginning to caſt about in her Mind where ſhe ſhou'd find a freſh Supply, at the Time when

when ſhe firſt became acquainted with the *Baron*. It is not to be imagin'd, that a Woman, in the Circumſtances ſhe then was, wou'd refuſe an Offer, which, in all her Bloom of Youth and Innocence, ſhe might have been proud to accept:——No, ſhe knew the World too well; and pretended her ſpeedy Compliance with his Deſires was the Effect of a Paſſion, which Deſert, like his, cou'd not but create, deluded the enamour'd *Baron* with a Belief he was the happieſt of his Sex; and they contriv'd to huddle up the Wedding in ſuch a Manner, that they were marry'd before any of his Friends had the leaſt Notion there was ſuch a Thing in Agitation. At the firſt Diſcovery of it, 'tis hard to ſay, whether Pity or Amazement had the greateſt Share in the Hearts of thoſe who heard it; but being depriv'd of the Opportunity of informing him what ſhe was in time, forbore to let him know the Ruin it was now too late to prevent, and contented themſelves with ſilently commiſerating his Condition.

If this Woman had been poſſeſs'd of the ſmalleſt Grain of Honour, Gratitude, or even common Good-nature, ſhe wou'd have endeavour'd by her future Manner of Behaviour, to retrieve the Errors of the paſt.——To be taken from a State of Life, which, if not abandon'd by all Senſe of Shame, muſt have been odious to her;——to be reliev'd from all thoſe Terrors which attend Uncertainty;—to be deliver'd from the Inſults of the judging World, and thoſe, more galling ones, the Man who *keeps* has a Privilege of inflicting; and rais'd from the loweſt and moſt contemptible Degree of Infamy, to Wealth, to Credit, and to Eaſe, were Bleſſings, ſuch as one wou'd think ſhe ſhou'd have been too ſenſible of not to acknowledge, and wiſh, at leaſt, to prove they were not ill beſtow'd. But ſhe was wholly dead to ſuch Conſiderations: She look'd on the large Fortune ſhe was now become Miſtreſs of, only as a larger Means to gratify her Inclinations; and as before ſhe had ſo much Regard to her Reputation, as to endeavour to

hinder the World from believing her ſo vile as ſhe really was, ſhe now gave a looſe to all the Sallies of her ungovern'd Paſſions, imagining her Quality a ſufficient Sanction for her Vices, and that no Body would dare to ſay of the Baroneſs *De Tortillée*, what they would have made no ſcruple to alledge of Madamoiſelle *La Motte*.

The Truth is, the *Baron*'s ſingular good Qualities, and affable Behaviour, had gain'd him ſo univerſal an Eſteem, that, in Reſpect to his Character (ſince Cuſtom has made the Errors of the *Wife* a Reflection on the *Huſband)* People were infinitely more ſparing of their Cenſures than otherwiſe they would have been, or than her Actions indeed deſerved. When ſhe was firſt married, Women of the beſt Reputation thought it no Scandal to viſit her, and be ſeen abroad with her; and had ſtill continued to do ſo, if ſhe could have reſtrain'd her Inclinations within the Bounds of even common Decency: But, alas! ſhe had no Senſe of Honour or Decorum, but, behav'd herſelf in ſo wild, ſo diſſolute a Manner, that in a little Time none, who but wiſh'd to be thought virtuous, would take notice of her: The very Men, who gloried not in Debauchery, ſhunn'd her Acquaintance, or were aſham'd to own it. This, which to a Woman capable of any ſolid Reflection, muſt have made her look back with Horror on the Vices which had ſo juſtly render'd her contemptible, did not in the leaſt alarm her; ſhe ſtill had a Set of Company who humour'd her Vanity, and, indeed, ſhe was eaſy in no other.

But, oh! how blind is Love! the *Baron* ſtill continued to adore her! So much was he deluded by her Artifices, that even her Vices appeared Virtues; the Profuſeneſs of her Expences ſeem'd to proceed from a Generoſity and noble Magnanimity of Soul, which, however deſtructive to his Fortune, he could not but applaud: The Liberties ſhe took in her Converſation with Men, paſs'd for an innocent Freedom which he could not imagine a Woman really criminal would dare

dare to make uſe of. In fine, every thing ſhe ſaid, every thing ſhe did, was a new Charm to him; and neither the palpable Neglect which he found the whole World treated her with, nor the Remonſtrances which ſome of his Friends, griev'd at his Infatuation, at laſt, grew free enough to make him, could oblige him to look with a jealous Eye on her Conduct, or in the leaſt abate his Dotage. Indeed, how little ſoever ſhe ſeem'd to regard the reſt of the World's taking notice of her Faults, ſhe, for the moſt Part, was cautious enough to prevent him from making any Diſcovery of them; or, if at any time, ſhe was conſcious of an Irregularity which might occaſion his Suſpicion, ſhe knew how to bring herſelf off; ſhe had Sighs, Tears, Swooning, Languiſhments, at Command: No Woman that ever liv'd was Miſtreſs of more Artifice, nor had leſs the Appearance of being ſo: Nature had given her a Countenance extremely favourable for her Purpoſe; and whenever ſhe was pleas'd to join to thoſe Looks of Sincerity and Innocence any Aſſeverations that ſhe was ſo, it was hardly poſſible to believe her otherwiſe: Her Voice too had a perſuaſive Softneſs in it, which it was very difficult to withſtand; and one had need to be perfectly acquainted with her *Actions* before one cou'd diſtruſt her *Words*. And this is all that can be ſaid to vindicate the unhappy *Baron* from that Imputation of Stupidity, which the long Series of his Deluſions have drawn upon him.

But to return to her Hiſtory, which alone can give the Reader any juſt Notion of her Character: There was among the Number of thoſe who now frequented her Drawing-Room, a Fellow call'd *Du Lache*: He was too diſagreeable to be receiv'd in the Quality of a Lover; neither did he viſit her with any ſuch View: *Fortune* had been leſs kind to him than *Nature*, for what he wanted in *Beauty* was abundantly made up in *Cunning*; but he was ſo wretchedly indigent, that tho' he had been employ'd in the Management of ſeveral Intrigues (for which

no body was more fit) he never had met with Perſons who thought the Service he did merited the Supply of even the common Neceſſaries of Life: He was half periſh'd for Want, when Chance brought him into the *Baroneſs*'s Acquaintance. They ſoon found in each other ſufficient to create an Intimacy; and ſhe thought herſelf no leſs fortunate in engaging to her Intereſt a Perſon whoſe Brain was capable of projecting every thing, and whoſe Principle was to ſcruple nothing, than he did in having it in his Power to oblige a Patroneſs, whoſe Humour, he perceiv'd, was not to make ſcanty Retributions for Service ſuch as his. In a ſhort time his *Tatters* were exchanged for *Embroidery* and *Brocade*; he had Money in his Pocket; went to *Court*, to the Opera's, Gaming-Houſes, Aſſemblies; kept Company with Gentlemen; and to thoſe who knew him not before, appeared like one himſelf. His Buſineſs was, in all publick Places, to extol the Wit and Beauty of the Baroneſs *Tortillée!* to make all Women appear vile in Competition with *her*;———if he heard one fam'd for any Excellence, to form ſome Story to degrade her;—to break off intended Marriages;—to render thoſe already wedded the Objects of each other's Hate; and, in fine, wherever he found a noble Friendſhip between Perſons of different Sexes, to endeavour to *diſunite*, or make it appear *ſcandalous*. *Malice* is ſeldom barren of Invention, and People that apply themſelves to this kind of Miſchief, have generally a Manner of *inſinuating* what they would have believed, which *Truth* and *Honeſty* diſdaining to make uſe of, are perfect Strangers to. *Du Lache* was ſo ſucceſsful in his Employment, that though the Marquis *De Sonville* had long lov'd, and been belov'd by one of the fineſt Women of the Age, not all her Charms, her Tenderneſs, her Conſtancy could maintain the Place ſhe held in his Affections, when once attack'd by the Artifices of this ſubtle Villain: He ſoon was brought to leſſen his *Eſteem*; and that deſtroy'd, all that remains of *Love* is

ſcarce

ſcarce worth calling ſo; *Indifference* immediately ſucceeds, and the Heart is free to receive the Idea of the firſt agreeable Object that preſents itſelf. No body can doubt but that the *Baroneſs*, for whoſe Sake all this was done, was the Perſon introduc'd. He was no ſooner diſcover'd to grow cool towards his former Miſtreſs, than he was brought to viſit her; and ſhe being extremely deſirous of engaging him, and knowing how to form her Behaviour to all Humours, found it no Difficulty to ſuit herſelf to his.

She alſo found her Account in the Addreſſes of the young Chevalier *St. Aumar:* He was handſome, gay, gallant, and liberal to an Exceſs: He profeſs'd publickly his Admiration of her, waited on her wherever ſhe went, treated, and made her very rich Preſents. One would think, indeed, that this *laſt* Article ſhould have but little Sway with a Woman of the Station ſhe was now rais'd to; but, alas! if the *Baron*'s Eſtate had been twice doubled, it would have been too ſmall for thoſe Expences, which, to indulge a Temper ſuch as her's, were abſolutely neceſſary. She was now above making Aſſignations at any of thoſe mean Places of Entertainment ſhe had formerly been accuſtom'd to; all muſt now be done with an Air of *Grandeur*; her *Embroiderer*, her *Milliner*, her *Mantua-maker*, her *Tire-woman*, had all of them Houſes of their own, handſomely furniſh'd at her Charge, and adorn'd fit to receive a *Meſſalina* equal to the firſt in Greatneſs. It muſt be confeſs'd that in *this* ſhe was politick enough; for whoever had ſeen her at any of thoſe People's Houſes, would not have believ'd ſhe came thither out of any other Deſign than to conſult about her *Dreſs*; but then it requir'd almoſt a *Prince*'s Revenue to ſupply the Demands of thoſe *Creatures*, and purchaſe the leaſt tolerable Aſſurance of their Secrecy. The Jewels, therefore, and other valuable Things, which the Prodigality of *St. Aumar* beſtow'd on her, were of great Service: for the poor *Baron*, who was always

pleas'd to ſee her appear magnificent, imagin'd they were bought with that Money which was really employ'd in Bribery on the Inſtruments of his Diſhonour.

But, tho' ſhe found it very much to the Advantage of her *Intereſt*, as well as *Pleaſure*, to converſe with *St. Aumar*, her Acquaintance with *La Sourbe* was infinitely more ſo to the one, tho' far incapable of the other. He was old, deform'd, diſeas'd, and had nothing either in his Perſon or Addreſs which could render his Careſſes ſupportable to a Woman of any Taſte; but the Abundance of his *Wealth* counterbalanc'd all other Deficiencies; and this fine Lady receiv'd him in his Turn, with all the Softneſs and obliging Tenderneſs that the moſt lovely of her Admirers thought themſelves happy in poſſeſſing. 'Twas to them all, indeed, but *feigned*; and therefore the ſame Arts ſhe practis'd to impoſe on others might eaſily be us'd on him; for in Reality ſhe never knew what 'twas to love ſincerely; and at a time, when, perhaps, there were twenty (tho' *each* believ'd himſelf the *only* bleſs'd) who poſſeſs'd all the Favours ſhe was capable of beſtowing, ſhe was over-heard to ſay (to one that was Partner in all her Secrets) That that Woman was a Fool that ever gave herſelf the leaſt *real* Uneaſineſs on the Account of *Love*.—— A Topknot tied amiſs (ſaid ſhe) would give me greater Pain than the eternal *Damnation* of all Mankind!—Not to be *ador'd*, indeed, is not to *live!* and to engage the Aſſiduity of a Fellow one likes, 'tis neceſſary to counterfeit a Paſſion! 'Tis certain ſhe did it with ſuch Succeſs, that the moſt diſcerning Eye might have been deceiv'd; how then could *La Sourbe* eſcape the Snare? He had but little been accuſtom'd to the Converſation of Women, and was utterly ignorant of the Wiles laid for him:——He thought himſelf in Heaven; and could ſcarce contain his Senſes amidſt that Profuſion of Delight her Wit, her Gaiety, her indearing Softneſs ſhower'd upon him. He knew not how, ſufficiently, to ſhew the

Senſe

Senſe he had of ſuch a Bleſſing as her Love, and thought of nothing but the Means of returning it to the utmoſt of his Power.——All his Hours, his Fortune, his very Life, was wholly at her Devotion; and ſhe had ſo abſolute a Command over him, and knew ſo well her Power, that ſhe even made him the Inſtrument of forwarding her Amours with others. But it was not only to her own Management ſhe was indebted for making the deluded Gentleman ſubſervient to her Ends; *Du Lache*, as in all the reſt of her Intrigues, was no inconſiderable Aſſiſtant here: He was extremely ready at Invention, had a thouſand little Stratagems to prompt decaying Deſire, and as many Ways to make the Perſon whom he found it his Intereſt to deceive, deaf to all Arguments but thoſe he undertook to maintain.

But notwithſtanding all his Cunning, he was extremely put to a ſtand, when coming one Morning, as was his Cuſtom, to viſit the *Baroneſs*, and receive her Commands, he found her at her *Toilet*, uneaſy to the laſt Degree: She had two or three Attendants in the Room, whom, as ſoon as ſhe ſaw him enter, ſhe diſmiſs'd, and ſtepping to him with ſomething of a diſorder'd Motion, O *Du Lache* (ſaid ſhe) I have wiſh'd for you this Hour!——I am diſtracted in my Thoughts; and if your hitherto ſucceſsful Wit ſhould now fail me, I am undone for ever.——Forbid it, Heaven! (anſwer'd he, ſtrangely ſurpriz'd). Yes (reſum'd ſhe) I again repeat it, I am undone, ruin'd for ever, unleſs you find the Means to help me:—All in my Power, Madam (added he) you know you may command. Talk not of Power (interrupted ſhe, immediately) this muſt,——this ſhall be in your Power, unleſs you wiſh to ſee me do ſome deſperate Deed:——If diſappointed here,——in the extremeſt Wiſh my Soul e'er knew, I'll murder you,——myſelf, and all who want the Means to eaſe me. She join'd to theſe Words ſo wild a Look and Motion, that *Du Lache* repented he had ſeem'd to doubt of his Ability to ſerve her, and endeavour'd to remedy

that

that Fault, by ſwearing that he would bring about whatever ſhe employ'd him in, let the Nature or Conſequence be what it wou'd. She appear'd ſomething more tranquil at this Aſſurance, and ſeating herſelf, and obliging him to do ſo; I am ſatisfy'd (ſaid ſhe) that your Zeal to ſerve me to carry you to great Lengths; nor do I think, when I have the Power of reflecting, that the Taſk I now enjoin is at all more difficult than thoſe you have already gone through, with all the Succeſs I cou'd deſire; but, alas! (continu'd ſhe, beginning to relapſe into her former Diſorder) the exceſſive Eagerneſs with which my Spirits are agitated in Purſuit of the Bleſſing I wou'd poſſeſs, and the certain everlaſting Miſery I muſt endure, ſhou'd my Endeavours fail, confuſes, drives me mad: My Soul will never know a Moment's Peace, till ſure Enjoyment ſhall deſtroy Suſpence: I cannot reſt while there remains a Poſſibility of being wretched:——Wretched, did I ſay? How poor are Words to expreſs what 'tis I mean?——'Twould be a Curſe beyond Damnation!—She utter'd many more the like Extravagances, till *Du Lache*, a little recover'd from the Aſtoniſhment her Behaviour had put him in, interrupted her by ſaying, That, if to be *diſappointed* of her Aim, wou'd plunge her in ſuch *Horrors*, the *Poſſeſſion* of it muſt certainly afford her adequate *Delight*, and begg'd her to think on *that*, and rely on the Induſtry to compaſs it, as ſoon as ſhe ſhou'd inform him by what Means. Well then (ſaid the *Baroneſs*, compoſing herſelf as much as poſſible) I will no longer doubt a Management which never yet has fail'd me; nor in the leaſt imagine, that in the Perplexity you ſee me, you will not do your utmoſt for my Relief; Know then (continu'd ſhe, ſighing) my preſent Diſorders are occaſion'd by a Paſſion, the Force of which I never before experienc'd.—Oft have I *lik'd*, but never, never *lov'd* till now.—One fatal Moment has inform'd me more, than all the various Amours of many Years cou'd do.—Oh! I have ſeen a Man, whoſe Looks, whoſe Voice

Voice, whoſe every Motion is Enchantment!——At the firſt View my melting Soul diſſolv'd;—— but when he talk'd, methought my very Life flew from me,——the ſoft Delight was more than Senſe cou'd bear!——O *Du Lache*, thou know'ſt this Prodigy of Charms!—this Wonder of his Sex!—this more than Angel!——yet dull, dull, as thou art, thou never ſpok'ſt him as he is!—Oft have I heard thy Tongue repeat the Name of *Beauclair*; but not with Raptures to enflame Deſire.———Why, too ungrateful Friend, wer't thou ſo careleſs of my Happineſs, as not to let me know that there were Joys in Love beyond all I had already taſted!——Cou'dſt thou,—tell me, I ſay, is it owing to thy Stupidity, or the Thankleſſneſs of thy Nature, that thou cou'dſt converſe of *Beauclair!* the adorable *Beauclair!* without a Wiſh *Tortillée* might be bleſt in his Poſſeſſion! 'Tis impoſſible to repreſent the Confuſion that *Du Lache* was in, when he heard the Name *Beauclair* mentioned in that Manner: He knew, indeed, that he had all the Perfections that the *Baroneſs* had deſcrib'd, and was not at all ſurpriz'd to find her ſo much more charm'd with him than ever ſhe had appear'd to be with any other; but he knew alſo that, all lovely as he was, the *Graces* of his *Mind* were far ſuperior to the *Beauties* of his *Perſon*, and was ſenſible there were ſome Obſtacles which he had good Reaſon to fear wou'd be invincible ones in her way to the Happineſs ſhe aim'd at. In the firſt Place, the Heart of *Beauclair* had long been devoted to a young Lady, fam'd for, and really Miſtreſs of every Excellence that cou'd adorn a Woman; that he was contracted to her before he went to his Travels (from which he was but lately return'd); and that there wanted nothing to complete the ſolemnizing the Nuptials of this accompliſh'd Pair, but the Recovery of a darling Brother, who, at that time, lay ill of a Fever. But tho' this of itſelf was ſufficient to deter *Du Lache* from entertaining any preſumptuous Hopes in favour of *Tortillée*, yet the Character of *Beauclair*

was

was infinitely more ſo: He had Honour, Conſtancy, Good-nature, and to all theſe Virtues an excellent Penetration, which render'd it almoſt an Impoſſibility to impoſe upon his Judgment: He plac'd not his Affections on *Montamour* (for that was the Name of his intended Bride) without a perfect Knowledge how worthy ſhe was of them: And the Charms of the one, and the Wiſdom of the other, was a Bulwark which this inſidious Villain fear'd wou'd be impregnable to all the Stratagems his Cunning cou'd invent. The Vexation this Conſideration gave him kept him from making an immediate Anſwer to what the *Baroneſs* had ſaid, 'till gueſſing the true Reaſon of his Silence, ſhe proſecuted her Diſcourſe in this Manner. I wonder not (reſum'd ſhe) that you appear diſorder'd at the Requeſt I make: A Lady who ſat by me laſt Night at the *Opera*, where I beheld this Idol of my Soul, gave me his whole Hiſtory; and I ſuppoſe 'tis his Engagement with *Montamour* makes you doubtful how far you may be able to prevail in behalf of *Tortillée*. You think, perhaps, *her* Charms maintain too forcible a Luſtre to be eclips'd by *mine*, and are unwilling to embark in a Deſign which you imagine cannot eaſily be accompliſh'd; but know (continu'd ſhe, with a Frown) that I am reſolv'd to triumph over this happy Rival, or die in the Attempt:——Therefore contrive ſome Means, and that this Moment too, to make me bleſt, or be aſſur'd I will not brook the Diſappointment unreveng'd. *Du Lache*, who knew the natural Obſtinacy of her Temper, made much more ſo by the Violence of her preſent Deſires, found it wou'd be altogether fruitleſs to ſet before her Eyes the little Likelihood there was for her to ſucceed. All he could do, was to intreat her Patience, and proteſt by all the Oaths he cou'd invent, that he wou'd exert his utmoſt Abilities to procure the Satisfaction ſhe requir'd; And perceiving nothing but an abſolute Dependance cou'd make her leſs deſperate, he was oblig'd to give her Hopes (which himſelf believ'd were but fallacious)

cious) that in a few Days ſhe ſhou'd be in Poſſeſſion of all her Soul was bent on.

It was now that he found himſelf in the greateſt Perplexity he had ever been in all his Life: The more he conſider'd on the Promiſe he had made, the leſs Probability there appear'd of making it good; and to fail, he knew wou'd ruin him with the *Baroneſs* for ever: His *preſent Subſiſtence*, and his Hopes of making his *future Fortune*, depended on her Favour, and he grew almoſt diſtracted, when, after a thouſand various Projections, he cou'd find none that ſeem'd feaſible to preſerve it. He endeavour'd, however, to delay the Misfortune he dreaded, and by concealing his inward Perturbations, and always, in her Preſence, appearing with his former Gaiety, made her indeed believe he really had found the Means of doing what ſhe expected from him. To divert her Thoughts as much as poſſible from *Beauclair*, he never ſuffer'd her to be alone; and whenever the *Baron*'s Abſence gave them an Opportunity, he contriv'd that either the Marquis *De Sonville*, the Chevalier *St. Aumar*, or Monſieur *La Sourbe*, or ſome one or other of her *Devotees*, ſhou'd be perpetually with her. But all this was of but little Efficacy; ſhe was ſo far of the Humour of *Mankind*, that if *Beauclair* had been leſs *agreeable*, yet he was *unenjoy'd*, and *therefore* moſt *deſirable*. She was willing, however, to triſle away the time in theſe Amuſements, till that happy Moment ſhou'd arrive, which was to give her more extatick Joys: And knowing the Subtility of *Du Lache*, and how much it was his Intereſt to oblige her, did not greatly doubt but that ſome way or other he wou'd bring it about. The truth is, it ever was uppermoſt in his Thoughts; but he found ſo little Likelihood that any Efforts he ſhou'd make wou'd meet with Succeſs, that he was beginning to deſpair; when, on a ſudden, his prompting *Fiend*, which ſeldom left him long unaided, put it into his Head, that Madamoiſelle *Sansfoy* might be of uſe in the Miſchief he endeavour'd. This was a Lady whoſe

extreme

extreme Love of hearing herſelf ſpeak, made her often the Inſtrument of both Good and Ill, without any Intention of her own to ſerve the End of either: She had a great deal of *Vanity* in her *Nature*, and therefore could not be without an equal Share of *Coquetry* in her *Behaviour*; and as ſhe was exceſſive fond of being admir'd by the *Men*, could not be capable of any real Regard for the *Women*. She took a vaſt Pleaſure in piquing any one more amiable than herſelf, and was never ſo happy as when ſhe had the Power of giving Pain. She dreſs'd well, was Young, Gay, and perfectly well Shap'd, had very regular Features, and a moſt delicate Complection;—and to all this an uncommon Quickneſs of Apprehenſion, and a ready Thought, and a free and eaſy Delivery of her Words, and an entertaining Turn in Converſation, which made her Company every where deſir'd. She was acquainted both with *Beauclair* and *Montamour*, and had with the latter as great an Intimacy as the Difference of their Humours wou'd permit. It was not difficult for a Perſon of much leſs Diſcernment than *Du Lacht*, to find out what manner of Addreſs would be moſt acceptable to this fine Lady: He had ſeveral Times happen'd to meet her at a Place where he had viſited, and from that took the Liberty of going to ſee her at her Houſe: He wanted not Words to *excuſe*, nor ſhe Good-Humour to *forgive* the Boldneſs; and perceiving himſelf favourably receiv'd, after a thouſand Encomiums on her Beauty had uſher'd in the Diſcourſe, he told her, That nothing had ever ſo much the Power of giving him Surpriſe as that *Beauclair*, who had ſeen the Wonders of her Charms could ſo far wrong his Judgment, and the good Opinion the World had of his Wit, to give *Montamour* the Preference in his Eſteem. It muſt be confeſs'd, indeed, ſaid this ſubtle Detractor, that ſhe has lovely Eyes, a fine Shape and Air, a vaſt deal of Wit, and, where *Sansfoy* is Abſent, is Miſtreſs of a thouſand Soul-attracting Graces; but when you both appear together, I cannot help believing that *Beauclair*,

clair, and all (as many ſuch there are) who think like him, are blind. He very well knew the Effect theſe Words would produce; and that a Woman of the Temper ſhe was, to whom they were directed, is not ſo angry with the *Praiſer* as the *Prais'd*. *Sansfoy* immediately grew pale with Envy; and imagining that what *Du Lache* had ſaid of the Paſſion of *Beauclair* for *Montamour*, only expreſs'd a mannerly Commiſeration of her Want of Charms, who had not Power to engage him, was ready to burſt with inward Spite all the time he had been talking; till, able to contain no longer, I know not (ſaid ſhe, with a diſdainful Toſs of her Head) how *many* there may be of *Beauclair*'s Mind, in his Admiration of *Montamour*, but I am very ſure that *none*, beſides himſelf, take any pains to be well in her Eſteem; and, perhaps, the little Interruption he has to fear in his Addreſſes there, is the greateſt Inducement to his making 'em. *Security*, added ſhe, is a valuable Article in *Marriage*, and as he deſigns her for a *Wife*, Houſewifry, Silence, Meekneſs, Obedience, and Humility, are the Accompliſhments he thinks moſt neceſſary. But, Madam (reſum'd *Du Lache*, rejoic'd he had wrought her to a Diſpoſition proper for his Purpoſe) do you really believe this ſeeming virtuous Lady is what ſhe appears to be? Is there no favourite Lover, who in the Dark triumphs over *Beauclair*?—I have heard odd Stories, which yet bear a Poſſibility of Truth.——For Heaven's ſake, what? (interrupted *Sansfoy* eagerly) who is the Man? Pardon me, Madam, anſwer'd he, I dare not make Reports, which I am not ſure may not be fabulous.——I would not for the World be guilty of Injuſtice:——Nay, tho' I knew all I have been told were poſitively true, I am too tender of Ladies Honour to repeat it. The natural Curioſity which always made her inquiſitive into the Affairs of every body, pointed now with Malice, fill'd her with perfect Agonies; ſhe would have given almoſt a Limb to be let into this Secret, and the greater Unwillingneſs he pretended

tended to divulge it, the more ſhe grew impatient to diſcover it. She entreated him with ſo much Earneſtneſs, and ſo many Conjurations, that at laſt he ſeem'd won by 'em, and told her a long Story which he had before invented; the Sum of which was, That Monſieur *Galliard* had long been an Admirer, and in ſecret poſſeſs'd all the Favours that *Montamour* could give. The Reaſon why this artful Villain made this Gentleman a Property to further his Deſigns, was, that he knew *Sansfoy* had a prodigious Deſire to engage him, and of conſequence would more induſtriouſly blaze abroad the Scandal he aim'd at, than if he had mention'd a Perſon more indifferent to her: He knew alſo that he had been acquainted with *Montamour* from her Childhood; that he was accounted of an amorous Diſpoſition, and that he profeſs'd an extraordinary Friendſhip for that Lady. And tho' there needed not all theſe Probabilities to make the cenſorious *Sansfoy* believe all he ſaid, yet he was ſenſible there was occaſion for many more, and ſtronger, to oblige the reſt of the World to entertain an ill Opinion of a Woman who had ever behav'd with an exemplary Diſcretion.

THIS was the firſt Step *Du Lache* had made toward the diſuniting the Affections of theſe two amiable Perſons; the next was to ingratiate himſelf as much as poſſible with *Beauclair*. He had a good Voice, and Judgment in Muſick; and being told that Gentleman was a great Admirer of it, found Means to oblige him to a liking of his Converſation, by preſenting him with ſome fine Compoſitions, which he ptetended had been ſent him by ſome of the beſt Maſters in *Italy*, whom he kept a Correſpondence with. Not all *Beauclair*'s Wiſdom could defend his Good-Nature from being deluded by the Artifice of this common Traytor to all Honour and Virtue; he became extremely pleas'd with him, and far from ſuſpecting his Deſigns, let him into all his Affairs with a Freedom which ſome time after he found he had ſufficient Reaſon to repent. One Day as they were

were alone together, he told him he had been the Night before at *Montamour*'s; that *Sansfoy* was with her; and ſtaying till it was late, he had waited on her home, that as they went, ſhe had given him ſome Hints he was not ſo happy in the Affections of his Miſtreſs as ſhe had made him hope; and that *Galliard* was mention'd by her in a manner which, tho' he was not inclinable to Jealouſy, had given him much Diſquiet. 'Twas with a vaſt deal of Satiſfaction that *Du Lache* found his Plot had ſo well ſucceeded on *Sansfoy*, and now began to hope there was a Poſſibility of deceiving them all, by the ſame means he had done her: He diſſembled his Sentiments, however, and ſeem'd to regard what *Beauclair* had told him, but as a Thing in which he had no manner of Concern, tho' all the time he was in his Company, his Invention was at work how to make the beſt Uſe of what he heard; and having hit on a Thought which ſeem'd to be a lucky one, diſengaged himſelf as ſoon as poſſible, and went about the Execution of it.

He ſaw that with Wiſdom, Honour, Generoſity, Sweetneſs of Diſpoſition, and a thouſand ſhining Qualities which made up the Character of *Beauclair*, there were certain Frailties mix'd, which prov'd him not abſolutely divine. From their laſt Converſation, he gather'd that an Impatience of Indignities, and a too great Aptitude to credit all Reports that ſhou'd be made him, gave Treachery an advantagious Ground to dart her Arrows from; and perceiving that thoſe little Reflections *Sansfoy* had made, had been ſufficient to give him pain, he reſolv'd to ſtrengthen what ſhe ſaid by Proofs which ſhou'd wear the Appearance of Infallibility.

TONCAR and *Le Songe* were Men that had no other Dependance than their Wits; and if employ'd in any Deſign, which they found it their Intereſt to undertake, thought it the leaſt of their Buſineſs to enquire whether it were honourable, or not. A publick Oath, or private Aſſaſſination, were what at any time a Proſpect

Proſpect of Advantage wou'd lead them to. *Du Lache* was perfectly acquainted with their Principles, and in his Days of Poverty had been one of their Aſſociates, and therefore made no doubt but he ſhou'd find them both willing and able to ſerve him in his preſent Affair. The Moment he left *Beauclair* he ſent for 'em to his Lodgings; and having communicated the whole Matter to them, and receiv'd their Promiſes of Aſſiſtance, they all together agreed on a Stratagem, which was accordingly executed the next Morning in the Manner following,

DU LACHE went pretty early to give the *Bonjour* to *Beauclair* at his Lodgings; and after ſome little Diſcourſe of ordinary Affairs, aſk'd that Gentleman, whom he knew to be a Lover of it to walk with him, it being a Morning full of Temptation. The Propoſition was agreeable; and as ſoon as he was dreſs'd they went together on foot towards the *Louvre*, deſigning for the Gardens: But as they turn'd the Corner of a little back Lane, which carried them to the great Street before the Palace, they heard a ſudden Claſh of Swords; and immediately ſaw two Men engag'd in ſo furious a manner, as if each had vow'd the other's Death: But one of them ſeem'd leſs ſkillful in the Uſe of his Weapon, and was preſs'd upon by his Adverſary with ſo much Advantage, that, in all Appearance, he muſt have fallen, or yielded, if *Beauclair* and *Du Lache*, no other Perſons happening to be near, had not run into his Relief. The Moment they advanc'd, the Perſon that ſeem'd to be the Foil'd, took to his Heels, and was immediately out of ſight: His Antagoniſt made an offer of purſuing, yet not ſo eagerly but that he was eaſily withheld by *Beauclair*, who aſking what had been the Occaſion of their Quarrel, and how it happen'd that they had made choice of a Place ſo unfit for their Purpoſe, cou'd get no other Anſwer from him, than that he was undone! and that to have been hinder'd from purſuing the Perſon with whom he had been fighting, was a more cruel Misfortune than the Loſs

of

of his Life wou'd have been, had the other got the better. *Beauclair* was prodigiouſly amaz'd at theſe Words: He cou'd not imagine that a Fellow of the Rank he appear'd to be (being dreſs'd after the manner of a Valet) cou'd have ſo nice a Senſe of Honour as to prefer it to his Life, and had a great Curioſity to know of what Nature this Affair was; which made him extremely pleas'd when *Du Lache*, pretending an equal Aſtoniſhment, preſs'd the Man to relate it. At laſt, ſeemingly overcome by the Perſuaſions of Gentlemen to whom he ow'd his Safety, he told 'em (after he had engag'd their Promiſes never to reveal the Secret he was about to intruſt 'em with) That he was a Dependant on Monſieur *Galliard*, had formerly liv'd with him, and was now employ'd by him in the Conduct of an Amour which, if diſcover'd, would certainly be of fatal Conſequence. The young Lady, ſaid he, with whom my Maſter (for I ſtill call him ſo) is enamour'd, is of Quality, and has a Brother whom the leaſt Occaſion of Suſpicion wou'd ſet on fire for the Honour of his Family. Every body knows the Temper of Madamoiſelle *Galliard*, that ſhe is one of the moſt jealous Women on Earth; and being fix'd in a Belief that ſhe is not ſo well in her Huſband's Affections as ſhe cou'd wiſh, makes it her whole Study to find out what Woman is the Cauſe; for ſome ſuch one ſhe is ſure there is, and, if diſcover'd, will not fail to expoſe her in the moſt groſs and ſhameful Manner imaginable. Now you muſt know, Meſſieurs (continu'd he) that this Lady being pretty cloſely obſerv'd by the Brother I told you of, and a Gentleman whom ſhe is ſhortly to be married to, cannot oblige my Maſter with her Converſation neither ſo frequently nor ſo long as both of 'em deſire; but his Impatience had contriv'd a Way to remedy that Misfortune. He provided a little Ladder of Ropes, which ſhe faſtening to her Window, he might eaſily enter, and paſs a whole Night with her. This very Ladder, and a Letter appointing the Hour he was to go,

go, I was this Morning to deliver to her; but, O unlucky Accident! *Madamoiſelle*, whether ſhe overheard the Orders he was giving me, or whether ſhe only ſuſpected my ſo often coming to the Houſe, and being in private with my Maſter, was on ſome ſuch Deſign, I know not, but ſhe immediately ſent a Fellow, a Creature entirely at her Devotion, after me, who following me without my taking Notice, or in the leaſt imagining he was behind me, till we came into this By-Lane, where he ſnatch'd my Bundle from me, which, unſuſpecting any ſuch thing, I held careleſly in my Hand, he immediately whipp'd it into his Pocket, and drawing his Sword to defend his Prize, perceiving I was doing the ſame to recover it, engag'd me in the Manner in which you found us.

There was a viſible Alteration in *Beauclair*'s Countenance from the firſt Moment this Fellow mention'd the Name of *Galliard*; but when he heard him ſay, the Lady, to whom he ſhould have deliver'd the Ladder of Ropes, had a *Brother*, and that ſhe was in a ſhort time to be *married*, his Face ſeem'd dy'd in Crimſon, his Eyes ſhot Fire, and wild Impatience diſtorted every Feature. With what a Pleaſure *Du Lache* obſerv'd it, the Reader will eaſily imagine; for I believe none will be ſo ſtupid, as not to ſee that this was the Contrivance which had been form'd the Night before; and that thoſe Fellows who ſeem'd ſuch Foes, were no other than *Le Songe* and *Toncar*, who had confederated with the other, and invented this Story, which was likely enough to confirm the Suſpicions *Beauclair* had already, thro' *Sansfoy*'s Suggeſtions, conceiv'd of the unblameable *Montamour*. This artful Villain, to further the baſe Deſign ſo ſucceſsfully begun, immediately cry'd out in a ſeeming Aſtoniſhment, O Heavens! This Lady whom you have been ſpeaking of, is no other than *Montamour*, and this Gentleman, to whom with me you have been diſcovering her Weakneſs, the very Man who was deſign'd to make her happy in a Husband. A thouſaud Circumſtances

ſtances concur to make me know my Fears are but too true.—What have I done? (return'd the other with a well counterfeited Terror) what have I ſaid?—— Wretch that I am,—has my unwary Tongue let ſlip aught that may diſcover what my Maſter would not for his Soul have known?—has any inadvertent Word eſcap'd me, that gives you Reaſon to imagine 'tis *Montamour* who is enamour'd of *Galliard* to ſo high a Degree, that for his Sake ſhe can conſent to ſuffer Freedoms, ſuch as I have been ſpeaking of?—O too, too ſure! (continued he, tearing his Hair) I am by ſome fatal Accident made guilty; the Secret of my Maſter is betray'd; the Lady is expos'd; and we are all ruin'd! No, no (ſaid *Beauclair*, aſſuming as much as poſſible his accuſtom'd Serenity of Countenance) you are ſo far from being guilty of any thing that can be call'd a Crime, that in making this Diſcovery, tho' undeſign'd by you, you have obliged a Gentleman who never will be ungrateful. Take this (added he, giving him a Purſe of Gold) and ever be aſſur'd to find a Friend in *Beauclair*. The Fellow ſeem'd to ſtart at the Name of *Beauclair*; and after having ſeveral times repeated, Good God, is it poſſible! fell on his Knees, entreating him, that in what Manner ſoever he expreſs'd his Reſentments, that he would take no notice of him in the Affair. I am an unfortunate Gentleman (added he) who have a large Family and no other Dependance than the Favour of my Maſter; and as it was not through Deſign, but Accident, I have made you acquainted with this Hiſtory (little ſuſpecting, Heaven knows, how deeply you were intereſted in it) I beg my unhappy Children may not ſuffer for the Folly of their Father; for ſure I am, if Monſieur *Galliard* ſhould know it is from me you learned the Secret, my Life would be the firſt Sacrifice he would offer to his Miſtreſs's Reputation. All the Rage of Temper which *Beauclair* had been endeavouring to quell, return'd at this laſt Word, with greater Violence than ever, and wholly unable to contain his Fury.——

His Mistress! interrupted he, O Damnation on the Thought! Ten thousand Fiends torture her false deceiving Soul:—Curse on her treacherous Charms,—her counterfeited Modesty,—her cool Reserve!—the Jilt, the Hypocrite! Was there no Man but me to have made a Property?———Am I, of all my Sex, chose out as fittest for the Cover of her secret Lewdness? He would, doubtless, have vented the o'er-boiling Passions of his Mind in many more such like Exclamations, if *Du Lache* had not reminded him of the Place they were in, and entreated him to conceal his Disorders till he should come into one where Privacy should more conveniently permit him to indulge them. *Beauclair* thank'd him for this friendly Admonition, and turning to *Le Songe* (for it was he who had entertain'd him with this fine Invention) bid him be easy; for whatever he should determine to revenge the Wrongs *Galliard* had done him, it should never be known by what Means he made a Discovery of them. *Du Lache* parted from this confederate Villain with an applauding Smile, for the Success of an Enterprize which they promis'd themselves to be very merry at hereafter, and follow'd *Beauclair*, who, with an Air that spoke his inward Agitations, was walking toward the Palace-gardens. They took two or three Turns there; but the Charms of the Morning having drawn a good deal of Company, it grew troublesome to this distracted Lover: He went home again, and giving Orders not to be disturb'd, shut himself into his Closet with *Du Lache*. It was now this subtle Insinuater had an Opportunity of making every thing appear as he would have it. The prudent and reserv'd Behaviour which render'd *Montamour* an envy'd Example to all the young Ladies of her Time, by his Suggestions now seem'd all Artifice; and the Heart which had so long, and so justly paid Homage to her as the most truly adorable of her Sex, was now brought to consider her as the vilest. At first his Resolutions were to send a Challenge to *Galliard*;

Galliard; but this miſchievous Adviſer, with Reaſon, fearing that if they fought, which ever got the better, ſuch an Encounter might produce an *Eclairciſſement* ſufficient to detect his Villainy, perſuaded him, that as ſhe had render'd herſelf unworthy of his *Affection*, ſhe alſo had of his *Regard*; and that it was too much to hazard his Life in a Cauſe which, when known, could neither add to his Honour, or reſtore that of the Perſon for whom he fought. To what End, *Monſieur* (ſaid he) ſhould you engage in a Quarrel of this Nature? *Galliard* is not a Rival, whoſe Addreſſes *may*, but already *have* obtain'd every thing to the Prejudice of your Paſſion; and ſhould your Sword have all the Advantages you could deſire, what would it avail? *Montamour* would not be leſs unſullied; his Blood could never waſh her Stains away, nor could his Death give back that Virtue which alone can make her worthy of your Love. He us'd many more Arguments of this Nature; and finding the other inclinable to liſten to every thing he ſaid, Methinks (reſum'd he) it better would become a Paſſion injur'd to that Degree yours is, to pay the Injuſtice with Scorn than Anger;——and ſince Heaven, by a Means ſo unexpected, has given you a perfect Knowledge of her Perfidy, to imagine you will ſtill continue any Profeſſions of Tenderneſs there, would be to harbour the moſt deſpicable Notions of your Underſtanding; to deſiſt from them, without condeſcending to give her any Reaſons for ſo doing, would be the moſt galling Revenge you can take:——Let all thoſe who have ſeen your *Adorations*, be Witneſs of your *Contempt*;——if Chance ſhould bring you into her Preſence, behold her with *Indifference*;——ſpeak of her with *Diſdain*; and, if poſſible, think of her as ſhe deſerves, with *Hate*: Or (continu'd he, perceiving *Beauclair* could not forbear ſighing at that Word) if that is a Taſk too difficult to be accompliſh'd preſently, *feign* at leaſt to do ſo,——Believe me, who am perfectly well acquainted with the Humour of the Sex, that nothing

is ſo great a Shock as cool Indifference: —*Rage*, though expreſs'd in the rudeſt Manner, ſtill diſcover there are Remains of Paſſion in the Heart which har- bours it, and only feeds the Pride of her 'tis vented on; but a *ſedate*, an *unregarding* Air, ſtabs the vain *Coquette* in the tendereſt Part. You ſpeak my Senſe (anſwer'd *Beauclair)*; I do not believe any thing ſo truly ſtinging to Womankind, as when they find their Power of creating Inquietudes are paſt; and yet (cried he, after a Pauſe) I ne'er obſerv'd in *Monta- nour* that Humour;—but (added he, changing his Voice) ſhe is all Artifice,—all damn'd Deceit, and knows how to dreſs the worſt of Vices with a Shew of Virtue: *Du Lache*, I hate her, by Heaven I do,—and ſhe ſhall know I do:—I'll write and tell her ſo this very Moment. Alas! (reply'd he) how little is a Soul, in the Condition yours is, capable of judging of its own Conceptions?—To ſay you *hate*, is to confeſs you *love*; for Heaven's Sake do not thus un- man yourſelf;—if you muſt write, let it be—What? interrupted *Beauclair*. I wiſh (rejoin'd the other) you'd give me Leave to dictate. With all my Heart (anſwer'd he) write what you think moſt proper— what you yourſelf in the like Circumſtance would ſay; but take care, be ſure not to let ſlip one Word which may look like Tenderneſs, and I will copy it over and ſend it to her ſtrait.

THUS did this unſuſpecting Gentleman, blinded by Paſſion, and ſooth'd by the baſe Arts of the moſt treacherous of all Villains, join in the Deceit against himſelf, and aid the Ruin of his own Hopes. *Du Lache* was too aſſiduous in Miſchief to give him time for Reflection; and taking Pen and Paper, imme- diately writ in this Manner:

To Madamoiſelle MONTAMOUR.

THO' nothing is more baſe than for the Tongue or Pen to make Profeſſions of a Paſſion which the Heart is a Stranger to, yet nothing is more in faſhion even among thoſe who pretend to the greateſt Honour of both Sexes; but as I reſolve to be for ever out of it, ſo I will not accuſe you, *becauſe I will not give you the Trouble of endeavouring at a Juſtification, which will be altogether vain.*

THIS, therefore, comes to bid you an eternal Adieu; *wiſhing you a long Series of Contentment in thoſe Amuſements you are pleas'd, at* preſent, *to place your Felicity in; and that the Memory of what has paſs'd between us, may not* hereafter *afford a more juſt Occaſion of Diſquiet to* you, *than to the*

Once paſſionate

BEAUCLAIR.

THIS being extremely approv'd of by *Beauclair*, was immediately copied over by him, and ſent to *Montamour*; but notwithſtanding the Rage he was in, and the ſeeming Reaſon he had to be ſo, the Reſpect he had always been accuſtom'd to pay this Lady, not all his Belief of her Unworthineſs cou'd utterly eraſe: He could not bring himſelf to treat her in this Manner, without giving to his own Soul a Shock the moſt ſenſible it could ſuſtain; and tho' he was perſuaded to an Aſſurance that what he did was entirely right, he could not do it without Agonies inexpreſſible.

BUT if the *Sender* of theſe cruel Lines felt ſuch Diſquiets, how infinitely more terrible muſt their Influence be on the unfortunate *Receiver*, the innocent injur'd *Montamour?* Tho' her Modeſty, and the natural Reſervedneſs of her Temper had kept her

from making ſuch violent Declarations of her Paſſion, as many of her Sex are too apt to do, yet never Woman lov'd to a greater or more ſublime Degree: Had Life and *Beauclair*'s Satisfaction been at ſtake, ſhe would have made no Scruple to relinquiſh the one, if by it ſhe might have purchas'd him the other: With ſuch a Profuſion of Tenderneſs ſhe regarded him, that her whole Soul was taken up, and render'd incapable of any other Thought; nor had ſhe, till this unhappy Moment, thro' the Courſe of her Affection ever met with the leaſt Cauſe to make her wiſh ſhe could be leſs devoted to him. How prodigious then, how much beyond what *Words* can repreſent, or even *Thought*, unfeeling it, conceive, muſt be her Aſtoniſhment, her Grief, her Indignation, at theſe diſtracting Lines! It was but two Days ſince he had parted from her with all the Tokens of a ſoul-raptur'd Paſſion, and what now cou'd move him to abjure it, and renounce his Vows, was ſomething ſo amazing, that it ſeem'd impoſſible.——She could not preſently believe her Eyes:—She read the fatal Scroll again and again; and being perfectly aſſur'd it was his *Hand*, had not the leaſt Hold for Hope his Heart was untainted with the Vices common to his Sex ——— She found herſelf utterly abandon'd; the Letter told her ſo, in Words too plain to ſuffer her to make a doubt of it; and what ſhe endur'd in that Reflection, none, but thoſe in the like Circumſtance, can gueſs. The Hints he gave, that ſhe plac'd her Felicity in Amuſements in which he had no part, ſhe conſider'd as the common Artifice of Mankind, who, when they no longer find it to their Satisfaction to continue their Profeſſions, to veil their own Inconſtancy and Levity of Nature, throw the Odium on the Perſon they forſake; and in this View he appeared ſo black, that for ſome Moments ſhe found Eaſe in Hate: Stripp'd of thoſe Graces (ſaid ſhe to herſelf) which diſtinguiſh'd him from the reſt of Men, and which alone cou'd excuſe the Idolatry of my fond Soul, I ſhould deſerve the Contempt

Contempt he treats me with, ſhou'd I perſiſt to love;——No, I'll deſpiſe him, drive him from my Heart, for ever,—ingrateful as he his,—unworthy even of my Remembrance. This Reſolution ſeem'd, indeed, moſt conſonant to *Reaſon*; but, alas! how little are the Slaves of *Love* capable of obeying ſuch Dictates? The Weakneſs of her Sex, or rather the Weakneſs of her Paſſion, threw her immediately into ſoft Complainings: *Beauclair*'s ten thouſand Charms, his flowing Wit, his ſweet enchanting Air, his tender Proteſtations, Languiſhments, and Vows, all came freſh into her Mind, and Streams of Tears put out the Fire of Rage. It was about Noon when ſhe receiv'd this ſurprizing Letter; and altogether unfit for Converſation, ſhe was oblig'd to feign herſelf indiſpos'd, to avoid dining with her Brother, who liv'd in the Houſe with her, and was but juſt recovering from a long Fit of Sickneſs. The Neceſſity ſhe had of ſhunning his Preſence till ſhe had a little overcome her Diſorders. was no ſmall Addition to them: The Marriage-Ceremony between her and *Beauclair* waited only for this Gentleman's Return of Health, and what Pretence ſhe ſhou'd make for breaking it off, ſhe knew not; for the Thought of telling him in what Manner ſhe was us'd by her ungrateful Lover was inſupportable, not out of a womaniſh Pride of diſdaining to confeſs ſhe had been forſaken, but becauſe ſhe knew not how far and how fatally his Reſentment might tranſport him in the Vindication of a Siſter affronted in ſo unpardonable a Manner. If her Tenderneſs for *Beauclair* had, by his late Behaviour, been render'd leſs prevalent, ſhe had a Generoſity in her Soul which made her look upon Revenge as a Paſſion juſtly to be abhor'd; and how to prevent it, her Brother being naturally violent, gave her Diſturbances little inferior to her others. She had alſo a long and uneaſy Debate within herſelf in what Terms ſhe ſhould anſwer thoſe Lines which had made ſo ſudden an Alteration in her Fate, or whether ſhe ought to anſwer them at all; and the

Uncertainty in what Way it was beſt for her to proceed in an Affair ſo every way diſtracting, took from her the Power of doing any thing for ſome Time.

THO' 'tis poſſible whatever ſhe had writ *Du Lache* might have found Means to confute, and by conſtruing her Words, turn'd 'em to favour his Deſign, yet her Silence furniſh'd him with an Opportunity of perſuading *Beauclair*, that it was not only an Argument of her Guilt, but alſo, that, had ſhe but the leaſt Deſire to retain a Place in his Affections, ſhe wou'd have made a Trial of her Power, and endeavour'd to regain him: Her taking no notice of your Letter (ſaid he) is a Proof that ſhe rejoices in an Occaſion to break with you; and thinks to be eſteem'd by you, is of ſo little Conſequence, that ſhe will not be at the Pains of one Invention (of which her Brain is ſufficiently ſtor'd) to purchaſe it. With theſe kind of Suggeſtions he was always at his Ear, haunted him like his Shadow whereſoever he went, and never ſuffer'd his Reſentments, by a Moment's Ceſſation, to grow cool, till he thought he had intirely brought about his End of extirpating all Remembrances which might riſe in his Soul in favour of *Montamour*.

THINGS being in this favourable Poſition, he thought it now high time to introduce the *Baroneſs* into his Acquaintance: He had often mention'd her to him as a Perſon the moſt extraordinary of her Sex, and every now and then took Occaſion to tell him he had ſeveral times heard her ſpeak the Name of *Beauclair* with a kind of Tranſport. Were ſhe unmarried (ſaid the cunning Villain) and Miſtreſs of an Empire, the Admiration ſhe pays your Virtues (for ſhe is no Stranger either to your Perſon or Character) would moſt certainly entitle you to ſhare it with her. There are very few People, if any, of either Sex, tho' never ſo free from what we call Vanity, that feel not a ſecret Pleaſure in hearing themſelves prais'd; and indeed where ſuch a Deſire is not immoderate,

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it is rather an Argument of a *noble*, than a *baſe* Nature. Ambition is laudable when it extends no farther than to excel in thoſe Qualities which may render us agreeable to Society, ſerviceable to the World, and pleaſing to Heaven; but when diſregarding the *Subſtance*, and graſping at the *Shadow*, we aim only at the *Reputation* of a Perfection, without taking any pains to make us *worthy* of it, 'tis idle *Oſtentation*, and often draws the Owner into worſe Vices, *Envy* and *Detraction*. Such a Perſon can hardly endure another to be ſpoke well of; whereas the other hears his Companion extoll'd with no other Uneaſineſs than a ſecret Indignation againſt himſelf, for either his Inability, or Want of Application to attain thoſe Virtues he finds ſo univerſally applauded. *Beauclair* cou'd not be poſſeſs'd of ten thouſand inimitable Graces, and be ignorant they merited Admiration; and tho' he was ſo accuſtom'd to create it, that he cou'd not be much tranſported at what *Du Lache* told him of the *Baroneſs*, yet the Sweetneſs of his Diſpoſition made him always think himſelf oblig'd to the good Opinion of any one, much more to a Lady's, of whom he heard ſuch Wonders. He ſeem'd very well pleas'd to encourage an Acquaintance with her; and the rather, becauſe he hoped the Converſation of a Woman ſo agreeable and witty, as ſhe had been repreſented, might be a Means more effectual to drive *Montamour* from his Thoughts, than he found all the Efforts he had been able to make.

The Day which was appointed for him to accompany *Du Lache* in his Viſit to her being arriv'd, it is not to be doubted but that, having notice of it, ſhe took all imaginable Care to appear amiable in his Eyes: If there be any Charm which Art and Study can acquire, neither was here wanting to procure it: Her Dreſs, her Looks, and her Behaviour, were all fram'd to pleaſe: and having throughly inform'd herſelf by *Du Lache* what beſt wou'd ſuit his Humour, ſhe threw the vain *Coquette* entirely off, and

wore the Appearance of the Woman of *Honour*,—— Her Carriage, tho' affable and complaiſant, was all on the Reſerve; nor did ſhe (ſo exact was ſhe in Diſſimulation) in the leaſt Word or Action, all the time he ſtay'd with her, ſwerve from the moſt nice Punctilio of Modeſty. They parted extremely ſatisfy'd with each other: He conſider'd her as an agreeable Acquaintance, and ſhe him, as a Man, whom in time ſhe might be able to ſubdue.

After this, they had frequent Interviews, ſometimes at her own Houſe, and ſometimes at Madamoiſelle *D'Ovrier*'s, where *Du Lache* had alſo introduc'd him, as if it were by Chance, and not with any Deſign of meeting the *Baroneſs*; tho' this indeed was one of thoſe Places of Rendezvous beforemention'd: But tho' his Carriage was full of Gallantry and Complaiſance, yet neither his Words nor Actions had any Symptoms of that Paſſion ſhe was ambitious of inſpiring, and which alone could make her eaſy. To inform this Dulneſs of Nature (as ſhe acounted it) ſhe began to leſſen her Reſerve, and aſſuming an Air all ſoft and tender, talk'd to him, and look'd on him with that ſort of kind Concern as is uſual between the moſt near and affectionate Relations; and believing it neceſſary to give ſome little Hints that there was ſomething yet more endearing in her Soul, would now and then let fall a Word, caſt an amorous Glance, and vent a Sigh as if it had eſcap'd her in ſpight of her Endeavours to reſtrain it. In fine, ſhe manag'd with ſuch Artifice, that he muſt have been as *inſenſible* as he was really *diſcerning*, not to have perceiv'd ſhe lov'd him; but the Reluctance with which ſhe ſeem'd to let any Thing ſlip which might give him Cauſe to imagine he had made an Impreſſion on her, extremely heighten'd his Eſteem; and tho' he had not been able to drive the Idea of *Montamour* ſo much out of his Mind as to be capable of entertaining a new Flame, yet he could not help feeling a ſecret Satisfaction in the Influence he found he had over a Soul

Soul ſo nicely virtuous, and full of noble Sentiments, as he believ'd hers to be. The good Opinion he had of her, may, perhaps, ſeem ſtrange, conſidering in what a vaſtly different Light her Character appear'd in the Eyes of moſt People; but till *DuLache* (who had taken care to prepoſſeſs him with Notions all to her Advantage) introduc'd him to her, he was utterly unacquainted either with her Fame or Perſon. His Travels had taken him up ſome Years, and ſince his Return to *Paris*, his Engagement with *Montamour*, and the ſincere Tenderneſs he had for her, entirely engroſs'd all his Hours, and left him not a Moment to throw away on Enquiries after any other Woman; and as the Sweetneſs of his Diſpoſition made him always ready to think the beſt of every body, it is not to be wonder'd at, that for a Time he was deceiv'd into a Belief of the *Baroneſs*'s Virtue.

But the Reſpect which his too-favourable Opinion had inſpir'd him with, was far from forwarding what her Wiſhes aim'd at: She eaſily perceiv'd it, and truly judging by the Fire ſhe obſerv'd in his Compoſition, by the tender Languor which ſometimes trembled in his ſhining Eyes, and by the Air of all his Motions, that he was no Enemy to ſoft Deſires, and that the diſtant Complaiſance with which he treated her, was more owing to the Belief he had, that to offer at a nearer Familiarity wou'd not be receiv'd, than to any Diſlike to her, or Coldneſs in his own Nature, ſhe reſolv'd to act in ſuch a Manner for the future, as ſhould let him ſee that it was impoſſible for him to preſume beyond a Pardon. She communicated her Intention to *Du Lache*, and order'd him, that on all Opportunities he ſhou'd hint to *Beauclair* ſomething of her Paſſion, ſeem to be ſurpris'd at the Diſcovery he made of it, and pity the Conflicts he muſt imagine ſhe endur'd between her Virtue and Deſire. He extremely approv'd of what ſhe ſaid, and obey'd her Commands with ſuch Succeſs, that by what he told him, and by what

himſelf had of late gather'd from the *Baroneſs*'s Behaviour, the other was convinc'd it would be no Difficulty to obtain from that Lady the greateſt Condeſcenſion he cou'd require. If thus encourag'd he had refus'd to take the Advantages were offer'd him, he either muſt not have been a *Man*, or of a Soul much more refin'd than Man is ordinarily poſſeſs'd of. Tho' *Vanity* and *Curioſity* wear the Name of *Female Foibleſſes*, yet they are often (without any other Incitement) the Occaſion of making the moſt deſerving Woman lament the Inconſtancy of her Huſband, or Lover. But to thoſe two Motives, *Beauclair* had, indeed, a third: The Deſire of baniſhing as much as poſſible all Remembrance of a Perſon he thought ſo utterly unworthy as *Montamour*, and, as he has ſince confeſs'd, and as by the the reſt of his Character one may reaſonably believe, this laſt was the moſt prevailing Argument which induc'd him to imagine an Affair like this cou'd be of any conſequence to his Happineſs. But notwithſtanding all that his Reſentments to *Montamour*, or that Levity of Nature (too incident to his Sex) cou'd ſuggeſt, his Inclinations were not ſo much upon the Wing as to engage him to make any great haſte to proſecute the Conſummation of it; and he had, perhaps, delay'd ſo long, till ſomething had happen'd to prevent all Deſires of attempting it, if the Lady's Impatience had not made her take ſuch Meaſures as, in a manner, oblig'd him to declare himſelf.

One Evening as they were alone together at Madamoiſelle *D'Ouvrier*'s (*Du Lache* having excus'd himſelf from waiting on *Beauclair*) ſhe artfully waving all other Subjects of Converſation, turn'd it in ſuch a Manner, that it more wore the Face of *Chance* than *Deſign*, into an Argument on the Force of *Love*: She pretended to prove that whatever Indecorums were the Conſequences of that Paſſion, they were wholly *unavoidable*, and therefore cou'd not but be *pardonable*. A man muſt have been very uncourtly, indeed, that, whatever his Thoughts were wou'd

have

have diſputed with a Lady on that Topick: *Beauclair* was more gallant; and believing that if ever he deſir'd any greater Teſtimonies of the Conqueſt he had made of her Heart, than what her Eyes declar'd, now was the Time to obtain them, he catch'd her ſuddenly in his Arms, and ſtrenuouſly embracing her, cry'd out in a ſort of Extacy, O Madam! how divinely good you are to declare your Willingneſs to forgive Actions which cannot, by him who gazes on your Charms, but with Torments inexpreſſible be reſtrain'd! And perceiving ſhe affected a little Aſtoniſhment at his Proceeding; Nay, Madam, continu'd he, by your own Words you ſtand condemn'd, I own my ſelf a Lover, an Adorer of your Perfections!—I am no longer Maſter of my Paſſion!——I muſt indulge the burning Wiſhes of my Soul!——And you muſt pardon 'em!——You have ſaid you will;—and ſure, you are too heavenly to retract your Promiſe.—A thouſand melting Kiſſes, on her Lips, on her Eyes, her Breaſts, made a delightful Parentheſis between almoſt every Word he ſpoke, and took from her the Power of anſwering, if ſhe had attempted it; but ſhe, who was truly charm'd with him, and had long languiſh'd for the Bleſſing ſhe now ſo unexpectedly poſſeſs'd, was for ſome Moments too much tranſported to have recourſe to Artifice. Scarce knowing what ſhe did, ſhe mix'd her Breath with his; and as he held her, preſs'd him cloſer ſtill; But Preſence of Mind (which till this Juncture never had been abſent from her Breaſt) reſuming its former place, and reminding her, how cheap, in his Eſteem, a too eaſy Yielding would make her appear, oblig'd her to make ſome faint Efforts to get looſe from his Embrace. ——O unhappy and unguarded Woman that I am (ſaid ſhe, ſeeming to weep) by my own Inadvertency I am loſt!--This dangerous Charmer has ſearch'd into my Soul, and found the fatal Secret out, which till this Moment I durſt not tell my ſelf.——Oh! I am undone for ever (purſu'd ſhe after a Pauſe, and muſtering all her Force to dart one piercing Glance)

Glance) unleſs *Beauclair*, the wondrous,—the lovely, dear deſtroying *Beauclair*, will be kind enough to let me,—to take himſelf for ever from me,——and let me ſee that all-undoing Form no more. Firſt periſh this Form interrupted he, by this time ſir'd, if not with *Love*, with ſomething which too often bears the Name of it) blind theſe Eyes! and new, and unimagin'd Curſes light on each Limb and Faculty of *Beauclair*, when he conſents even in a Thought to quit the divine *Tortillée!* Ah! then, cry'd ſhe, there is no Power in Heaven or Earth can ſave me!—Fame, Duty, Virtue, are too weak Defences--againſt thoſe conquering Eyes, that Shape, that Air, that Mien, that Wit, that Voice, thoſe thouſand, thouſand Worlds of Charms! Death only is a Refuge for *Tortillée!* As ſhe ſpoke theſe Words, ſhe ſunk by degrees, and at laſt fell quite back, in a counterfeited Swoon, in the Chair ſhe was ſitting in. *Beauclair* ſtarted immediately from his, and run to the Door, but not to call any Aſſiſtance, or bring Water to revive her (as perhaps ſome over-aw'd Lovers might have been ſtupid enough to have done) but to make it faſt, and prevent any other Perſon from ſharing with him in the Glory of reſtoring her to Life; nor was he, at his Return, at a Loſs for Means to bring her back to Senſe: But if he cou'd have had Power to inform that Senſe with a juſt Notion of the Happineſs ſhe was Miſtreſs of, ſhe had *indeed* been bleſt; his extravagant Extent of charming, if not a ſufficient *Sanction* for the Crime, was yet a prodigious *Excuſe*, and his unqueſtion'd Honour a Security for the Concealment of it. But, alas! not all the Glories of his Form or Soul, not all the countleſs Wonders of his Wit and Beauty could work that Miracle, and triumph over the Inconſtancy of this univerſal Diſpenſer of her Favours. She who, engag'd with a Multiplicity of Lovers cou'd find no Satisfaction while wanting *Beauclair*; languiſh'd for others, when poſſeſt of him; and this accompliſh'd Gentleman, in a little time, ſerv'd but to ſwell the Number of her Admirers,

Admirers, ſcarce diſtinguiſh'd, in her Eſteem, from thoſe among'em of the leaſt Pretence to Merit.

But to go on gradually with her Hiſtory: She now accounted herſelf ſuperlatively bleſt, and perhaps was, for a Time, of the Opinion ſhe never ſhou'd wiſh a Joy more elevated than what ſhe had poſſeſs'd in *Beauclair*; while he, deluded by his own Good-nature, the Inſinuations of *Du Lache*, and the Subtilty of this fair Impoſtor, rioted in Imagination, and grew almoſt vain on the Influence of his own Charms, which, without an Attempt, or even a Wiſh that way, had vanquiſh'd a Heart he believ'd impregnable to the united Force of the whole World beſides. *Montamour* was now no more remember'd; her Beauty, and her reported Falſhood were loſt amidſt the Hurry of his preſent Tranſports: But the fallacious Pleaſure was hardly more than momentary; an Idea which once has made a true Impreſſion, and which Length of Time has rivetted in the Soul, is not with ſo much Eaſe eraz'd, tho' exil'd for a While, by Cares, by Buſineſs, or another Object; a Thouſand tender Paſſages, in ſpite of us, occur, and bring the Charmer back; and he that once has lov'd *ſincerely*, is in great Danger of *always* loving. This was at leaſt the Caſe of *Beauclair:* He was no ſooner at home, and had Leiſure for Reflection, than *Montamour*, adorn'd with all her Graces, came freſh into his Mind; and when he endeavour'd to extirpate her by thinking on *Tortillée*, he but gave himſelf Diſorders which he found it impoſſible to quell.—If he compar'd, either the Beauties of their Minds, or Perſons, how infinitely ſuperior to the *latter* (ſetting aſide the Belief of her Inconſtancy) did the *former* appear! The Raptures he ſo lately enjoy'd, already pall'd, and made Deſire grow ſick: The more he conſider'd how much he was belov'd by *Tortillée*, the more he was diſtracted at the Thoughts that he had been unable to inſpire the ſame Degree of Tenderneſs in *Montamour*: Glad wou'd he have been to have had it in his Power to return with ſomething more than Gratitude that

Vehe-

Vehemence of ſincere Affection, which the *one* ſeem'd ſo profuſely to laviſh on him, and to have paid the imaginary Contempt and Ingratitude of the *other* with Hatred and Diſdain. But both theſe Wiſhes were impoſſible; and he found, in ſpite of all the Strength of Reaſon he was Maſter of, that *Love* is not a Paſſion liable to controul. To add to his Diſquiets, and put Reflection more upon the Rack, juſt as he was going to Bed, a Page from *Montamour* brought him a Letter from her; which haſtily opening, he found in it theſe Lines:

To Monſieur BEAUCLAIR.

THAT I anſwer'd yours no ſooner, was only owing to the Uncertainty I was in if I ſhould anſwer it at all. The Levity of a Mind which could dictate Lines like thoſe you writ, is, indeed, worthy of nothing but Contempt; but I am of a Temper conſtant to a Fault, and confeſs my ſelf unable, immediately, to deſpiſe, *what I have once, tho' cauſeleſly,* eſteem'd.

YOU need not, however, be under the leaſt Apprehenſion, that after this you ſhall receive any Perſecutions either from my Love, *or* Reſentment; *and am ſo far from endeavouring to be juſtify'd in your Opinion, that I do not ſo much as aſk of what I am* accus'd; *and conſcious of no other real Guilt, on your Account, than in putting a too-great Confidence in your ſeeming Sincerity and Honour, ſhall make uſe of ſo much Diſcretion as not to regard whatever imaginary Crime your Baſeneſs may alledge againſt me, to vindicate your Change of Behaviour.*

I THINK my ſelf too much indebted to Heaven, for putting ſo early a Stop to my future *Engagements with you, to look back with Regret on the* paſt; *much leſs to languiſh for a Renewal of thoſe fictitious Proteſtations with which you once had the Power of deceiving*

The Unthinking

MONTAMOUR.

P. S.

P. S. *To let you ſee with how much Tranquillity of Mind I bear the eternal Loſs of you, I have perſuaded my Brother, that our breaking off is owing only to my ſelf; you therefore have nothing to fear either from his or my Reſentments, if you never endure more from a too-late Repentance, and the Reproaches of your own Conſcience, you will be happy—*

Adieu——for Ever.

WITH what ſort of Emotions the Soul of *Beauclair* was agitated at the reading this Letter, wou'd be as impoſſible to deſcribe, as it was for him to fix on any one Sentiment to give him Eaſe. The cold Diſdain with which it ſeem'd to be writ, fir'd him, at firſt, with Indignation: He thought ſhe gloried in her Falſhood, and rejoic'd in an Opportunity to break with him; but when he conſider'd it more carefully, he fancy'd he found a certain Stiffneſs in the Stile, which perſuaded him her Indifference was but feign'd. ——One Moment ſhe appear'd to his Imagination, as ſhe really was, all heavenly Truth and Innocence, languiſhing, dying with the cruel Alteration of her Fortune, and only *counterfeiting* to deſpiſe a Heart which had ſo ungenerouſly abandon'd her: ——— The next, he thought he ſaw her, as her Enemies had repreſented her, falſe, perjur'd, and inconſtant; in *private*, diſſolutely laviſh of her Favours, and only hypocritically modeſt and reſerv'd in *publick*:—Sometimes, in ſpite of all Appearance, he was inclin'd to think her virtuous, but then the Manner in which he was impoſs'd on to believe her otherwiſe, check'd the Suggeſtions of his Tenderneſs. ——— Long did the Fondneſs of his Paſſion ſtruggle againſt all Oppoſition; till at laſt, reſolving to give the Victory to that which ſeem'd to be the Reſult of *Reaſon*, — I will no more debate (ſaid he to himſelf) nor join to be my *own* Deceiver: *Heaven* is not more *true* than *Montamour* is *falſe*,—'Tis plain; and to have made a

Doubt

Doubt of it, after the Proofs I have had, is moſt ridiculous and vain.——No Envy, no Malice, no Deſign, cou'd have the leaſt Share in the Diſcovery of her Perfidy.——The very Fellow who betrayed her to me, knew not that he did ſo: —I 'ſcap'd the diſhonourable Title of her Huſband by a very *Miracle*, and to deliberate has made me half unworthy the Deliverance. O (continu'd he, ready to burſt with ſtifled Love, and madding Jealouſy) how wou'd the fair Apoſtate, and her curs'd Minion, the deteſted *Galliard*, triumph in his Pains, and deride my weak and ſhameful Irreſolution, ſhould any Chance but give them leave to gueſs it!

In this Confuſion of Thought he paſs'd the Night, nor did the Morning bring him any Return of Peace; and *Du Lache* coming pretty early to viſit him (as indeed he was ſeldom from him but in thoſe Hours commonly allow'd for Repoſe) was a little ſtartled to find, that all he had done had been unable to fix him in that Diſpoſition of Mind which the *Baroneſs* requir'd; and being from her perfectly acquainted with the Condeſcenſions ſhe had made him the Day before, had hoped, till now, that in the poſſeſſing her all his Wiſhes for *Montamour* were utterly extinguiſh'd; but finding himſelf deceiv'd, bethought him of another Stratagem, which he had reſerv'd as a ſaving Card, in caſe there ſhou'd be an Occaſion to make uſe of it, to ſtrengthen the Accuſations he had already laid on that unhappy Lady by the Means of *Le Songe*. As ſoon as *Beauclair* had given him an Opportunity, by communicating his Inquietudes to him, he exerted all his Policy in aſperſing her yet in ſuch a Manner, as if he did it with Reluctance, and only forc'd to it by the Friendſhip he had for him. Alas! ſaid he, her Intrigue with *Galliard* is not a Thing of Yeſterday: I long have been acquainted with the Secret, and ſo have many more, tho' every one, knowing the Violence of your Paſſion, forbore to ſpeak of it to you: Tho' never Man (continu'd he) had a more great and ſincere

cere Eſteem for another, than my admiring Soul has ever paid you, yet, to have been Maſter of an Empire, would not I have been the firſt to have divulg'd this to you, becauſe I ſee (with an Infinity of Concern I ſpeak it) I ſee in ſpite of all, you ſtill muſt *love*; and to know her Crime but racks your Peace, and Reaſon never can reſtore you to that Quiet which happy Ignorance beſtow'd. At theſe Words *Beauclair* flew into the utmoſt Rage, ſwore ſhe was hateful to him:———that he thought not on her but with Contempt; and, to engage the other to a Belief of what he ſaid, proteſted his whole Soul was now devoted to another. I wiſh, indeed (reſum'd this vile Incendiary) that there was a Poſſibility for you to do ſo, for I am moſt ſure you cannot any where beſtow the Treaſure of your Affection more undeſervedly:——To convince you of the Truth of what I ſay, if you pleaſe, I will wait on you to a Gentleman, a near Relation of mine, who by his Intimacy ſome time ago with *Galliard*, was privy to the whole Affair. At my Requeſt, I know, he will inform you of all the Circumſtances, which he well knows; and there are ſome Particulars concerning the Treachery of this *Montamour* to Madamoiſelle *Galliard*, to whom ſhe once was dear, which I believe you will confeſs to be ſuch, as vaſtly extenuate the Foulneſs of the Fact. Though *Beauclair* thought himſelf but already too well aſſur'd, yet the Reſolution he had made to hate her, and the Difficulty he found it would be to keep it, made him willing to liſten to every Tongue that ſhould repeat her Name in ſuch a Manner as might huſh the Pleas of *Love*, and drown all ſoft *Remora's* in the Voice of Scandal. An Appointment was preſently made, and in the Afternoon *Beauclair*, *Du Lache*, and *Toncarr*, who paſs'd for his Kinſman, met at a neighbouring Tavern. It was impoſſible for *Beauclair* to have any Notion of *Toncarr*, having never ſeen him but once, and then only in the Struggle with *Le Songe*, when he immediately fled, as was his Part:

Beſides,

Beſides, he appear'd now dreſs'd *en Cavalier*, and had a Mien and Air agreeable enough to make him be taken for a Man of Faſhion. After ſome few Compliments, *Du Lache* entreated him by their Nearneſs of Blood, and that much nearer Tie of Friendſhip which was between them, to relate what he had been privy to of the Hiſtory of *Galliard*, as to his Concern with *Montamour*. He ſeem'd at firſt a little ſcrupulous; but afterwards, artfully pretending to be angry with himſelf for denying him ſo long; Why, ſaid he, ſhould I make any Objections againſt obliging a Man of Honour, and my Friend, when what I have to ſay can turn only to the Prejudice of a Villain and my Enemy? I have renounc'd all Friendſhip with *Galliard*; and when I gave him his Life, at his Requeſt, and promis'd Secrecy of all had paſt, the Conditions on which I made the Promiſe being broke, to proclaim it now to the whole World can be no Breach of Truſt: Know then, Gentlemen, (continued he) I owe my Birth to *Naples*; but my Parents dying young, I was ſent over under the Care of ſome of my Mother's Relations to *Orleans*, where I had an Uncle. As ſoon as I arriv'd at the Age of diſtinguiſhing Perfections, I became an Admirer of a Lady allow'd to be Miſtreſs of all that Woman can be bleſs'd with; but Fortune not then enough my Friend to embolden me to make any Declarations of my Paſſion with Hopes of Succeſs, prompted me to ſeek Preferment in the Army. *Hungary* was then the Seat of War: And four Campaigns ſent me home in a Condition which I thought wou'd not appear deſpicable in her Eyes, by whom alone I wiſh'd to be well thought of.—But at my Return, I found ſhe was remov'd with her Mother. It was ſome time before I heard ſhe went to *Paris*: I ſoon follow'd, but tho' I made all poſſible Enquiry, was not able to inform myſelf any thing of her. I went to all publick Places, hoping to ſee her, knowing ſhe was of a Diſpoſition naturally inclin'd to Gaiety; but all my Search was vain. In this time

I became acquainted with *Galliard:* He ſeem'd extremely pleas'd with my Company, took all Opportunities to oblige me, made me the Confidant of his Amours, and, among the reſt, of his Affair with Madamoiſelle *Montamour.* Her Brother, as he told me, had forbid him his Houſe, and he found ſome Difficulty in conveying Letters to her; he form'd a Pretence for me to introduce myſelf to the Family, which, as it would take up too much time, and be of no Conſequence to the Story, I ſhall forbear to repeat. In fine, to repay ſome Obligations I had receiv'd from him, I took upon me to be his Emiſſary, and they had frequent Opportunities of meeting through my Means. I could not avoid condemning him, indeed, in my private Opinion, becauſe I knew he had a Wife, who, I heard by others, was a moſt beautiful and deſerving Woman, though he ſpoke of her as the *reverſe:* However, as ſhe was an utter Stranger to me, I thought it would be Imprudence to interfere with any Advice, which, 'twas probable, would only occaſion a Breach of Friendſhip between us, and be of no Service to the Lady. Thus it paſs'd on, till one Day he invited me to his Houſe, where I had never been before; but, good God! how ſhall I expreſs the Aſtoniſhment, when in Madamoiſelle *Galliard* I found the Charmer I had ſo long ſought! The Confuſion with which I beheld her as his Wife, and as a Wife ſo injur'd by him, muſt have been viſible to him, had he been preſent; but he was that Moment as ſhe came into the Room retir'd to his Cloſet to write a Letter, which I was to convey to *Montamour.* She bluſh'd at Sight of me, and burſt into a Flood of Tears at remembring the Tranquillity of her Condition when laſt ſhe ſaw me, and perhaps mix'd with a Senſibility of the Tenderneſs my *Eyes,* tho' not my *Tongue,* had often taken the Liberty of telling her I felt on her Account. There was then no Opportunity of private Converſation; he ſoon return'd to us: But after that I had frequent Opportunities of diſcourſing her,

her, and ſhe made no Scruple of complaining to me of his Unkindneſs.—I was almoſt mad at the Inhumanity of my Fate; and though I thought myſelf moſt wretched in being depriv'd of her, yet I ſolemnly proteſt I was not ſo much troubled that ſhe was *married*, as that ſhe was ſo *unhappily* married. I could no longer be paſſive to the Affair: I told *Galliard*, that now I had ſeen his Wife, and found her a Woman ſo infinitely deſerving, I could not approve of his Proceedings. At firſt he laugh'd at my Admonitions, but finding I perſiſted, ſeem'd to take it ill, and aſſur'd me, he ſhould always follow the Dictates of his Inclinations, without any Regard to what thoſe who had no Buſineſs with it, ſhould think of his Behaviour. Pretty well warm'd before, this Anſwer ſet me all on fire, and I return'd it in a Manner he knew not how to brook.—In ſhort, we fought, I had the good Fortune to diſarm him, and was about to revenge his Lady's Wrongs, when he entreated me to ſpare his Life, and ſwore ten thouſand Oaths never to injure her again in the Manner he had done.———On this I threw him back his Sword, and went immediately to *Montamour*, told her what I had done, and the Promiſe I had exacted from her Lover——She appear'd enrag'd at my Preſumption, as ſhe call'd it; but as Women are generally pretty artful in penetrating into thoſe kinds of Secrets, ſhe preſently gueſſing my ſudden Diſlike of their Intimacy proceeded from my Friendſhip to his Wife, ſoon grew calm, and changing her Voice; Well, *Monſieur* (ſaid ſhe) I ſee the Charms you have found in Madamoiſelle *Galliard*, have made you an Enemy to her Huſband; but ſuppoſe I value your Friendſhip at ſo high a Rate, that, to oblige you to my Intereſt, I contrive ſome Way to put you in Poſſeſſion of the *Wife*, will you refuſe me then your Aſſiſtance in the Continuance of my Happineſs with the *Huſband?* So ſtrange a Propoſition coming from a Woman, who, bating her criminal Affection for *Galliard*, I always look'd on as Miſtreſs of a good deal of Honour,

nour, took from me the Power of making an immediate Anſwer; and ſhe interpreting my Silence as a Token of Conſent, I will not (reſum'd ſhe) promiſe that Madamoiſelle will yield to your Deſires; ſhe is too fooliſhly fond of her Huſband, tho' he deſpiſes her, and too great a Bigot to her Matrimonial Vow; but this I will engage, to bring her to a Place, where, if you think fit to make uſe of the Advantage, Denials ſhall be in vain. I vow to you, Gentlemen (purſu'd he) that the Shock with which I heard her ſpeak thus, was greater than I am able to repreſent: The violent Paſſion I had bore to Madamoiſelle *Galliard*, while I believ'd her in a Condition capable of returning it, was now converted to a ſincere and noble Friendſhip; my Affection was too pure to wiſh to obtain more of her than Honour would permit, though with her free Conſent; how then cou'd brutal *Force* have any Place in my Intentions? I ſoon convinc'd this miſtaken Lady, that the Perſon ſhe was ſpeaking to, was of a Temper vaſtly different from what ſhe imagin'd; and endeavour'd, by all the Arguments I could invent, to perſuade her to conſider the Injuſtice ſhe was guilty of to *herſelf*, as well as to her *Rival*. But all was of no Effect; ſhe ſeem'd harden'd in her Crime, and pretended to vindicate what ſhe did with ſo much Haughtineſs, and ſo little Shame, that I queſtion if the moſt common *Fille de Joye* in *Paris* cou'd with ſuch Aſſurance have behav'd; She call'd me Sot, Fool, and every opprobrious Name her Spite and Anger cou'd put into her Mouth: Told me ſhe regarded not what my *Thoughts* were of her Actions; but if I dar'd to report 'em, ſhe had a Brother who wou'd not ſuffer the Abuſe to go unpuniſh'd. *Talking* never was my Talent; and being altogether unaccuſtom'd to ſuch kind of Encounters, ſhe had very much the Advantage of me, and I was at laſt glad to leave her unconverted. I heard afterwards, that all I had done prov'd ineffectual to break the Correſpondence between her and *Galliard*; and I had not fail'd to call

that

that diſhonourable Wretch a ſecond time to account, if his Wife had not writ to me, conjuring me to take no farther Notice of the Affair, for it but increas'd his ill Uſage of her in *private*, and gave Occaſion for *publick* Ridicule.

TONCARR here finiſh'd his monſtrous Lye; and *Du Lache*, tho' he had order'd him to form ſome Story which might ſeem plauſible to ſcandalize *Montamour* on the Account of *Galliard*, was himſelf aſtoniſh'd at the Power of an Invention, which, out of nothing cou'd create ſuch a well-connected Pile of Falſhood; for in Reality he knew no more of *Montamour* or her Brother, *Galliard* or his Wife, than their Names and Places of Abode. How then cou'd *Beauclair*, already prepoſſeſs'd (by Proofs, which he thought were undeniable) ſuſpect the Truth of what he heard? He aſk'd ſeveral Queſtions, not to entrap him, but to ſatisfy his own Curioſity; as how they look'd when together; what they ſaid; and in what manner they behav'd? To all which, *Toncarr* replied with ſuch an Aptitude and Readineſs, as whoever had liſten'd to their Diſcourſe, would have ſworn he utter'd nothing but Sincerity.

THO' ſuch a Story as this, of *Montamour*, ſome few Weeks paſt, wou'd have kindled ſuch a Fire of Indignation in the Soul of *Beauclair*, as nothing but the Blood of him that told it could have quench'd, yet now he heard it with no other Diſorder than what ſprung from the Shame of having been ſo much deceiv'd in his Opinion. If he had had Leiſure for Reflection, 'tis probable that in ſpite of all Oppoſers, *Love* would ſtill have exerted itſelf in favour of that Lady; but the Company he was in, took care to keep off an Enemy ſo dangerous to their Deſigns: *Toncarr* was of a very gay facetious Diſpoſition, had a good deal of Wit, and knew how to make himſelf perfectly entertaining in Converſation: The Subtilty of his Companion furniſh'd him with Themes, ſuch as he knew wou'd be agreeable to *Beauclair*; and between them both it was no difficult Matter to work

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on that Good-nature and Softneſs of Diſpoſition, the Exceſs of which was the only Foible of this deluded Gentleman. The Glaſs went briſkly round, and the Sprightlineſs of the Wine gave Life to the Converſation; not a celebrated Beauty in *Paris* but was toaſted; and it coming to *Du Lache*'s Turn to begin, Come Gentlemen (ſaid he) here is all Health, and an eternal Round of Happineſs to her whoſe *exterior* Charms (though by far ſurpaſſing all her Sex beſides) are but as Foils, when brought in Compariſon with the more ſhining Graces of her *Mind*; and when I thus deſcribe her, none who boaſt of a diſtinguiſhing Capacity, will need be told I mean the divine Baroneſs *de Tortillée*. Immediately *Toncarr*, before inſtructed, took the Hint, and fell into ſuch Encomiums on her, as in Reality no Woman ever did, or could deſerve. *Beauclair*, tho' he was far from being of their Opinion, thought himſelf oblig'd in Gratitude, for the Favours he had ſo lately receiv'd, to join with them in the Praiſes they gave her; and as moſt People are apt to admire what they find the reſt of the World do, and having never had the Opportunity of hearing the leaſt Tittle to her Diſadvantage, began to think on her as a Woman who had more Perfections than he had hitherto found out: He imagin'd it was owing to the Remains of his former Paſſion, that he had ſo long been blind, reſolv'd to open his whole Soul to receive her Idea, and accuſed himſelf of Stupidity that he was able to love her no better.

They broke not up till it was late; and *Du Lache* fearing, with good Reaſon, that if *Beauclair* was left too ſuddenly to himſelf, ſome Accident might happen to render all they had done of no Effect, and diſcover that neither *Montamour* nor *Tortillée* were the Perſons they had been repreſented, was reſolv'd to truſt nothing to Chance, but he went home with him, and carried him the next Morning to drink Tea with the Baroneſs; in the Afternoon met by Appointment at Madamoiſelle *D'Ovrier*'s; engag'd him to paſs the next Day with *Toncarr*; the enſuing

one with the Baroneſs again.—In fine, for a conſiderable time he had ſcarce a Moment which was not taken up by one or other of this Confederacy; and they took care, by ten thouſand various Artifices, to keep his Thoughts in a perpetual Whirl, till they imagin'd all Remembrance of *Montamour* was utterly extinguiſh'd.

In the mean time, never was a Heart more greatly diſtreſs'd than that of this unhappy Lady; to all the Softneſs of her own Sex, ſhe had that Conſtancy of Mind, and Steadineſs of Reſolution, which thoſe of the other *boaſt*, but rarely *prove* themſelves Maſters of. Difficult it was to make her entertain a Paſſion, but much more difficult to extinguiſh it. *Beauclair* was the only Man who ever had the Power to inſpire her with one tender Wiſh; but now not *Beauclair*'s ſelf cou'd change her Sentiments. The Impreſſion which his *Charms* had made, not all his *Ingratitude* cou'd eraſe: She lov'd, ſhe worſhipp'd, ſhe ador'd him ſtill; within her gentle Soul no Storms of Anger raged, no wild Revenge, no Jealouſy had Place; and when ſhe reflected how cruelly ſhe was abandon'd, how cauſeleſly affronted, ſhe conſider'd it only as a Flaw in his Diſpoſition, a Frailty influenc'd by *Fate*, unavoidable, and therefore pardonable. Never Woman bore the *Diſappointment* of her Hopes with ſo little Reſentment, nor ſo ſtrongly defended herſelf from making any Endeavours to *recover* 'em. In ſpite of the moſt ardent Love, the ſofteſt Languiſhment, the tendereſt ſecret Meltings of her Soul cou'd urge, ſhe choſe to die away in fruitleſs Wiſhes, rather than let the *dear Unkind* be ſenſible of what ſhe felt. She was ſo far from deſiring to take any Advantage of his ten thouſand times repeated Vows, or the ſolemn Contract that was between them, that her greateſt Fear was, leſt her Brother (if he knew the Truth of his Behaviour) ſhould take ſome Meaſures to oblige him to the Performance of it; and for that Reaſon blinded him as much as poſſible: She told him, that ſhe had diſcover'd ſome little Foible

in the Humour of *Beauclair*, which ſhe was afraid might not be very agreeable in a married State;—that ſhe was determin'd to continue as ſhe was for ſome time; and that ſhe had pretended to be piqu'd at ſomething he had done, on Purpoſe to create a Quarrel to retard the Match. The Turn ſhe gave to this Affair ſucceeded well enough, to engage the Belief of a Perſon, who, by reaſon of his great Employments (being Judge of the criminal Cauſes, one of the Council, and taken up with many other Concerns of the State) had not too much Leiſure to conſider the Occurrences of his Family; but to the reſt of her Acquaintance it was obvious that in *this*, though in *this* alone, ſhe was not free from Diſſimulation: Her *Eyes*, whenever ſhe attempted to ſpeak of *Beauclair* with Indifference, declar'd her *Heart* was far from conſenting to what ſhe ſaid: His very Name but mention'd, ſpread ſoft Confuſion over all her Face; with ſtifled Sighs her lovely Boſom heav'd, and gentle Tumults trembled in each Limb. She was ſenſible of it herſelf; and therefore, though her Thoughts were full of nothing elſe, forbore, as much as poſſible, all Diſcourſe of him. But the Violence ſhe did her Inclination was ſuch as Words would but vainly endeavour to repreſent: To avoid it, ſhe ſhunn'd all Converſation as much as ſhe cou'd without being taken notice of, and paſs'd her Hours in Solitude and Silence. Contemplation afforded her widely different Entertainments, unutterable Pleaſure, unutterable Pain! When retir'd. ſhut up within her Cloſet, no impertinent Interruption near, and *Beauclair*'s lov'd Idea only preſent, his Letters, fill'd with ten thouſand thouſand tender Vows and ſoft Profeſſions, lying before her, how did ſhe indulge Imagination, how dwell on each enchanting Syllable! And when read o'er and o'er, Fancy grew warmer ſtill, how did ſhe call the paſt bleſt Moments of his Preſence back! how reenjoy each Word, each Look, each Touch, and ſink in Rapture at the dear Remembrance!——But then, O dreadful Change! Imagination tir'd, the viſionary

Joy diſſolv'd, and Senſe, *diſtracting* Senſe, return'd, what Racks of Thought, what unmatch'd Horrors ſad Deſpair preſented! To be ſupremely *curſt*, one muſt be ſupremely *bleſt*; never to have been *happy*, is not to be *unhappy*; ſuch only linger out a Life in dull Stupidity, untaſting *Pleaſure*, and unknowing *Pain*; equally ignorant of *refin'd* Delight, or *exquiſite* Diſquiet;—but, to have *loſt*—to have loſt, for ever, all the Soul holds dear!——to have the Joys, once ours, torn from our bleeding Breaſts by the black Hand of ſeparating Fate, no more to be reſtor'd!——the chearful Land of Hope obſcur'd in Shades, and all before our Eyes a barren Proſpect, and a Wild of Woe! that, that, indeed, is finiſh'd Wretchedneſs, conſummate Miſery!

But if, to the being forſaken and affronted by the Man in whoſe Society ſhe plac'd her whole Felicity, there needed any thing to make her the moſt unhappy Woman breathing, malicious Fortune found the way to give it. Madamoiſelle *Bellfleur*, Embroiderer, one of thoſe Creatures whoſe Houſes had been at the *Baroneſs*'s Devotion, whenever ſhe had Occaſion for a private *Rendezvous*, had by ſome Accident diſcover'd that Madamoiſelle *D'Ovrier*'s was now the Place that Lady had made choice of for the carrying on her Amour with *Beauclair*; and being exceſſively piqu'd at it, ſet herſelf on being reveng'd ſome way or other. She was ſenſible that nothing was more known than the Loves of *Beauclair* and *Montamour*, and that the whole Town was ſurpriz'd at the Delay of a Marriage which ſo long had been expected; and imagining ſhe had found out the Cauſe, reſolv'd it ſhould no longer be a Secret. She had formerly been employ'd by *Montamour* in the working her ſome fine Gowns and Petticoats, and making that a Pretence for waiting on her, introduced a Story which the Hearer of it had little Reaſon to thank her for repeating: for tho' it was much more difficult to gain any Credit from this generous Lady to the Prejudice of her ungrateful Lover, than her Ene-

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mies had found from him even for the greateſt Falſhoods, yet the bare Probability that ſuch a thing might be true, was a Shock which cannot well be repreſented. In Juſtice to herſelf, ſhe could not avoid being of Opinion, that to be abandon'd for a Woman of the *Baroneſs*'s Character and Humour, was an Indignity ſuch as ought to make the Man that offer'd it odious to her Memory: But all that Pride or Reaſon could ſuggeſt, was too, too weak to bring her to either Scorn or Hate; nor though the cauſeleſs Change of his Behaviour, the Suddenneſs of it, and the cold, neglectful, and indeed affrontive Stile of his laſt Letter, made it ſeem likely enough that nothing but a new Paſſion could occaſion it, yet Jealouſy was ſo great a Stranger to her Nature, that ſhe could not, but with great Difficulty, entertain it. However, the little Touches ſhe now began to feel of that eternal Enemy to Tranquillity, gave her Perturbations far beyond all ſhe ever knew before.

It was not in this Manner the *Baroneſs* paſs'd her Time, believing herſelf ſecure of the Heart ſhe ſo ardently had wiſh'd to gain, revell'd in full Delight, and wanton'd in the Aſſurance of her Happineſs; proud, vain, and ſelf-ſufficient, ſhe now defy'd all Fears of ever loſing what ſhe had acquir'd, deſpis'd her Rival's Charms, and not only ſpoke of her, but alſo really conſider'd her as a Creature incapable of giving her any Pain on *Beauclair*'s Account, nay, tho' he ſhould diſcover by what Arts he had been betray'd to treat her in the Manner he had lately done. She hated her, however, for the Engagements ſhe had with him, and being naturally of a moſt malicious Diſpoſition to all amiable Perſons of her own Sex, took an inexpreſſible Pleaſure in having it in her Power to mortify 'em. This baſe Woman thought it not Miſery enough to have alienated the Affections of her Lover, but muſt ſtudy to inflict yet more: She could not think herſelf truly bleſs'd in the Poſſeſſion of *Beauclair*, without triumphing in the Conqueſt ſhe had made; it was not ſufficient for

her Pride, that *Montamour* was abandon'd; there wanted, to complete her Happineſs, the making that afflicted Lady ſenſible for *whom* ſhe had been abandon'd. She was now grown above the Care of her Reputation, and thought it beneath her to regard any thing but the pleaſing herſelf; and, intirely ignorant that Madamoiſelle *Bellfleur* had, in Part, perform'd the Work ſhe aim'd at, communicated her Deſires to *Du Lache:* He who was always ready to ſerve her on all Occaſions, was far from being backward in complying with her in this; and he approv'd of it the more, becauſe he imagin'd, that when *Montamour* ſhould know her Rival, it would increaſe her Reſentment to *Beauclair*, and render it impoſſible for them ever to be reconcil'd, and conſequently prevent any Diſcovery of thoſe villainous Impoſitions which had been made uſe of to diſunite them. Madamoiſelle *Sansfoy* came immediately into his Head, as the moſt proper Engine upon Earth to manage this Affair, who would infallibly do all, yet be ignorant herſelf of the Cauſe of what ſhe did: And as ſoon as he had conſulted with the *Baroneſs* after what Manner he ſhould ſet this eternal Clack a-going, went to viſit her with a Packet of Tidings, which he knew would render him a welcome Gueſt to a Lady of her inquiſitive Temper. He gave her a full Account of all the ſeveral Meetings of *Beauclair* and the *Baroneſs*, the Manner of their Converſation; and becauſe it happen'd to ſuit beſt with his Purpoſe, ſpoke Truth in every thing, but when he ſaid the *Paſſion* was wholly on *his* Side, the Deſire of coming acquainted *his*, and that all the Aſſiduity he had paid cou'd engage no other Return than Gratitude from the cold inexorable *Tortillée*. But the main Buſineſs of his Errand was to tell her, That the *Baron* being out of Town, the *Baroneſs* had conſented to paſs the Evening with himſelf and *Beauclair*, and that they were to meet in the *Tuilleries* at Ten a-Clock. He told her this, to the End, that if *Montamour* ſhou'd queſtion the Truth of what ſhe ſhou'd hear from *Sansfoy*, her Curioſity

Curioſity might, perhaps, lead her to ſatisfy herſelf by watching at that Place, where he and the *Baroneſs* had contriv'd to make things appear in ſuch a View, as ſhould diſtract her very Soul. As he had no other Deſign in viſiting her, than to make her the Inſtrument in tormenting *Montamour*, ſo ſoon as he had ſaid all that he thought would be conducive to his Purpoſe, he took his Leave: Nor did ſhe preſs him to ſtay, being as impatient to reveal what ſhe had promis'd to keep ſecret, as he was for her to do ſo, tho' he had artfully engag'd her to the contrary, well knowing that nothing is a greater Incitement to ſtir up a buſy Temper, than to adjure it to be paſſive. Tho' *Montamour* liv'd but a Street or two off, ſhe thought the Diſtance was too great; and, as ſhe went the few Steps there was between 'em, had a thouſand Dreads that the Perſon ſhe was going to might be abroad, or engag'd with Company, or ſome Accident ſhould happen which would retard the Recital ſhe had to make: But ſhe labour'd not long under theſe Apprehenſions; ſhe found her at home, and alone; and being receiv'd with the uſual Familiarity which that Lady always treated her Intimates with, ſoon diſburden'd herſelf of that Load of Secrets ſhe had been ſo big with: She forgot not the minuteſt Circumſtance ſhe had been told by *Du Lache*, to which her natural Propenſity to Scandal made her add a thouſand more. *Montamour*, with an aching Heart, liſten'd attentively to all ſhe ſaid, and long'd to hear ſomething improbable enough to make her hope that all the reſt was falſe; but moſt of the Particulars that *Sansfoy* mention'd, and eſpecially the Place of their Aſſignation, agreed ſo exactly with what ſhe had been inform'd by Madamoiſelle *Bellfleur*, that ſhe no longer had the Power of doubting. She bore it, however, with a Preſence of Mind, which very few, if any Woman, beſides herſelf, could boaſt of on the like Occaſion. She vented no Extravagancies,—ſhe curs'd not,—ſhe revil'd not;——and when *Sansfoy*, ſurpris'd and vex'd to find her of a

Humour ſo different from her Sex, began to teſtify her Friendſhip by ſome Expreſſions which ſounded like Condolement: Pity not me (interrupted ſhe, turning her Mouth to a half-diſdainful Smile, while her Eyes trembled to reſtrain their Tears) pity not *me*; rather commiſerate the unhappy *Beauclair*, whoſe eaſy Nature, and whoſe frank Belief, makes him the Property of ſuch Wretches, as *Du Lache* and his Companions. The Reputation of having an Intrigue with a Woman of the Baroneſs's Quality, will never balance the diſgraceful Means by which he has attain'd it; nor perhaps (continu'd ſhe, with a deep Sigh) will he be always of Opinion, that to have poſſeſſed her is a ſufficient Recompence for the eternal Loſs of *Montamour*. It was impoſſible for *Sansfoy*, who in ſuch a Circumſtance wou'd have behav'd in a Manner vaſtly different, to forbear expreſſing her Sentiments in ſuch Terms as Women commonly make uſe of:—Good God! ſaid ſhe, is this all?—Can you ſit down ſo tamely with your Wrongs! I know you love the Villain, — and can you bear to loſe him! Shall a Woman, ſo infamous as *Tortillée*, deprive you of him?——Will you not be reveng'd?——Will you not expoſe them both?——The *one* to the Ridicule of the whole World; the *other* to her Huſband's juſt Reſentment?——I am not ſo ignorant of her Character, as to imagine (whatever her Pander *Du Lache* wou'd perſuade me) that her Converſation with *Beauclair* is no more than a *Platonick* one;—— and if you pleaſe (continued ſhe, after a Pauſe, and finding the other was ſilent) I will join with you to ruin her: I am acquainted with the whole Hiſtory of her ſeveral Amours,——can prove that *d'Eſperanſe*, tho' he maintain'd her, was not the only favour'd Lover;——and that ſince her Marriage with this fooliſh Baron, ſhe has been had by half the Town,—nay, at this very Time, *St. Aumar* and the young amorous Marquis *de Sonville* enjoy an equal Share with the perfidious *Beauclair*.——I know where and when both of 'em have had Aſſignations with

with her.———Count *De la Torre* has alſo experienc'd how liberal ſhe is of her Favours: When he went out of Town the other Day, his Siſter found, among ſome Papers he had left behind him, Letters which by the Hand we knew to be *Tortillée*'s, and the Contents were ſuch, as are ſcarce fit for modeſt Ears:——I'll bring you acquainted with her; ſhe'll furniſh you with Stories, ſuch as will enable you to revenge yourſelf on this unworthy Rival. She wou'd doubtleſs have run on a great deal more, if *Montamour* (whoſe Soul was incapable of harbouring any mean Notions, and glow'd in her Boſom with a generous Diſdain at this Propoſition) had not put a Stop to the Career of her Revilings. She bluſh'd to think how juſtly her Sex was reflected on by the other; and looking on *Sansfoy* with an Air of Scorn, which ſhe was very rarely ſeen to wear, No, Madam! no, ſaid ſhe, I never will enter into any ſuch Meaſures, nor can be pleas'd that others ſhou'd ſo far intereſt themſelves in my Quarrel, as to make 'em forget that Decorum and Mildneſs of Behaviour, which ought to be the diſtinguiſhing Character of Womanhood:———The greateſt Proof you can give me of your Friendſhip, is to let this Story die.—I need not fear my Injuries will go for ever unreveng'd: The Crime itſelf will bring on Stings far worſe than I cou'd wiſh, much more have Power to inflict. If *Beauclair*, after ſo many Vows of an unalterable Affection, can be ſo baſely perfidious to quit me for the Baroneſs, he will alſo quit her for another;——her Empire will be of ſhort continuance. And to be forſaken, to a Woman of her vain Humour, will be a Puniſhment the moſt adequate of any to her Guilt; or if ſhe be really ſo vicious as the World believes, her Artifice will not always ſerve her to conceal it from the diſcerning *Beauclair*: Remorſe will then be ſufficiently my Avenger. But if neither of theſe ſhou'd happen, ſhou'd *he* be ever *blind*, ſhe *ever cunning*, I am reſolv'd, in Juſtice to myſelf, to continue entirely paſſive; for ſure a Woman, ſuch as ſhe, is as much below

my *Hate* as he by loving her, has render'd himself of my *Esteem*; both equally unworthy of my Thoughts, and only fit for one another. And is it possible (interrupted *Sansfoy*, more and more confounded) that you really are Mistress of so much Philosophy as you pretend? ——— Will Love, and Pride, and Grief, in such a stabbing Circumstance, be always over-power'd by Prudence? Could you endure to *behold* what yet you have but *heard* of?———Cou'd you bear to *see* the Man who has ador'd you,——— the Man on whom (in spite of your boasted Moderation) I know your Soul still doats, kneel to another, and pay those soft Submissions due only to you?——Could you, I say, support a Sight like this, and yet contain your Temper?——No, 'tis impossible!——'tis against Nature!—And, if I could persuade you to go with me in some Disguise, and be a Witness of their meeting, I believe I should find your Behavionr at such a View far different from what the hearing it occasions. I do not think you wou'd reply'd *Montamour* coldly: I have already so many Proofs of his Perfidy and Ingratitude, that to see 'em in the most strict Embrace cou'd not give me more. Yet, resum'd *Sansfoy*, eager to engage her to an Enterprize, in which she promis'd herself so much Diversion, there is something that more nearly touches the Passions in an *Ocular* Demonstration. — It may be so, interrupted *Montamour* (who knew the other's Humour too well, not to guess at the Cause which made her pressing) and for that Reason I will not endeavour to convince you, by putting my Temper to any hazardous Tryals, for the vain Glory of surmounting a Difficulty which few of my Sex would have Resolution enough to do. But (cried *Sansfoy*, vex'd to the Heart to find her still so calm) I advise you to it by all means: It wou'd rather be an Argument of *Stupidity* than *Prudence* to lose such an Opportunity of upbraiding *him*, and detecting your *Rival*: Should you but mention the Story now, it might be disbelievd;——both might deny

deny it,——and you only be call'd perverſe and jealous:——But if you meet them at this ſhameful Aſſignation, and Face to Face confront 'em, you boldly may proclaim him for a Villain, and enjoy that inexpreſſible Satisfaction of having your Rival in your Power. She ſaid a great deal more to the ſame Purpoſe; but all her Reaſons had no effect on *Montamour*: That diſcreet Lady reflected within herſelf on the Weakneſs of Humanity, and how little ſufficient *Reaſon* at ſome Times, and in ſome Caſes, is to vanquiſh *Paſſion:* She knew not how far ſhe might be tranſported at ſuch a killing Interview; and eaſily perceiving it was more the Pleaſure of having ſomething to talk of, than any Intereſt ſhe took in her Affairs, which made her Adviſer ſo importunate, reſolv'd ſhe ſhou'd rather want a Theme for the Entertainment of her next Viſiting-Day, than furniſh her with one, which ſhe was not certain might not be to the Diſadvantage of the Reputation of that Modeſtation, ſhe had hitherto taken ſo much care to preſerve. It was ſomething wonderful, indeed, that a Woman who lov'd to that prodigious Degree of Tenderneſs as ſhe did, and had ſuch Appearances how much that Tenderneſs was abus'd, cou'd ſo well diſſemble the Diſorders of her Soul. The whole Time that *Sansfoy* ſtaid with her, ſhe continu'd Miſtreſs of the ſame ſteddy Reſolution ſhe had always profeſs'd; and that buſy Woman had the Mortification, after all the Pains ſhe had taken, to find herſelf diſappointed, and that all ſhe had done was able to draw nothing from her which might be a Subject of Ridicule! But what the unhappy *Montamour* ſuffer'd while under ſo cruel a Conſtraint, can hardly be imagin'd! As ſoon as ſhe was alone, ſhe ſhut herſelf into her Chamber, and gave a Looſe to the long labouring pent-up Paſſions of her Soul:——Her Couch, —— her Bed, were now no longer able to ſuſtain the Force of her wild Grief;——ſhe grovell'd on the Floor;—ſhe beat her Breaſt; —ſhe rung her lovely Hands; — the celebrated Luſtre of her ſhining Eyes was now extinct

in Tears; and whoever had ſeen her in this Condition wou'd have believ'd it impoſſible ſhe cou'd, but ſome Moments before, have worn ſuch an Appearance of Serenity. As it grew nearer to the Hour, in which her Rival was to enjoy the Preſence of her ador'd *Beauclair*, her Agonies increas'd: O God! cry'd ſhe, now is the happy *Tortillée* preparing to receive a Heaven I have for ever loſt!—Now, now, ſhe ſummons all her Charms, adorns her Face with Smiles, and practiſes a thouſand Arts, a thouſand Graces, to ſecure her Conqueſt! ——— And what (O torturing Thought) what gives Addition to her Beauty, and makes her Eyes ſparkle with an unuſual Splendor, is the Knowledge that ſhe triumphs over the forſaken *Montamour!* Whenever this Reflection came acroſs her Thoughts, all that ſhe had of Woman in her Soul exerted itſelf; No, wou'd ſhe ſay, ſtarting up and wiping away her Tears, with an Air of Deriſion,—I am not, will not be unhappy;—I ſcorn the Wretch who yields his Heart, where neither Virtue, Wit, nor Beauty claim the Prize; where Novelty is alone the Charm.——He that can love *Tortillée*, the infamous, the often abandon'd *Tortillée!* ſhall henceforth be the Object of my *Mirth*, equally unworthy of my *Love* or *Anger*. But how long ſhe continu'd in this Mind, thoſe who have ever felt the Force of true Affection, need not be inform'd: To *them* it may ſeem ſuperfluous to ſay, *Tenderneſs* ſoon got the better of *Reſentment*; but the *Inſenſibles*, or thoſe who *love* only becauſe they are *belov'd*, will perhaps condemn her, when they ſhall know thoſe Reſolutions were no ſooner *made* than *broke*; and ſinking from that Air of Haughtineſs ſhe had aſſum'd, into one wholly compos'd of Softneſs: And yet, ſaid ſhe, among the Race of Man, where is there one whoſe Charms can vie with thoſe this dear, this falſe Proteſter boaſts?—How harſh, and how untunable wou'd ſound the Name of Love from any *other* Mouth! and with what Harmony it flows from his!——His Voice,——his Looks,—his ſoft enchanting Mien, adorn the tender Paſſion,

Paſſion, and make Deſire a Virtue. In this manner was ſhe hurried by the various Agitations of her Mind, till the Clock ſtricking Ten, put her in mind, that if ſhe did deſign to be a Witneſs of this meeting, it was time ſhe ſhould prepare herſelf. In ſpite of all the Temperance ſhe had maintained in the Preſence of *Sansfoy*, the Woman's Curioſity now gained the Victory: She could not be aſſured, that the Man who had made ſo many Vows to *her*, was that Moment about to offer 'em to *another*, without a Deſire to know in what manner he would do it; and, perhaps, was not without a ſecret Hope ſhe ſhould diſcover a Difference in his Behaviour; and, as wretched as ſhe thought herſelf, found a kind of Pleaſure, a ſullen Satisfaction in this Thought. Enabled by it, ſhe got on her Cloaths, and muffling herſelf up in her Hoods, ſo at it was impoſſible for her to be known, ſtole out of the Houſe alone without letting even her own Woman into the Secret. —— What is not *Love*, when inſtigated by *Jealouſy*, capable of performing! She, who at another time, or on any other Occaſion, would not have ventured where there was the leaſt Appearance of Danger, or to her Perſon or Reputation, now had either *forgot*, or had Courage to *deſpiſe* the moſt imminent ones; and, led by the Emotions of her tumultuous Paſſions, went when it was dark, unguarded, and unattended, to the Place which ſhe was told was deſtined for the Rendezvous of thoſe ungenerous Deſtroyers of her Peace. She had not been long in the *Tuilleries*, before ſhe diſcern'd a Man and Woman coming down a Walk oppoſite to that ſhe was in: She imagined it might be thoſe ſhe ſought, and immediately croſs'd, making only a little Stand to let them paſs, and follow'd at a convenient Diſtance, ſo near as to be able to diſtinguiſh what was ſaid; but far enough, as ſhe thought, not to have them believe they were obſerv'd. The Baroneſs (for it was ſhe, indeed, who, accompanied by *Du Lache* had prevented the Hour appointed by *Beauclair*, that ſhe might have the Opportunity of executing

cuting that Deſign before concerted with her aſſiſting Villain) preſently perceiv'd her; but finding ſhe was alone, could not be aſſured whether it was her *Rival* or *Sansfoy* herſelf, who ſhe knew had Curioſity enough for ſuch an Enterprize, if ſhe could not prevail on the other: But not doubting, that whatever ſhe ſhould diſcover would be carried immediately to *Montamour*, began to talk to *Du Lache* in the manner they had contrived for the inſulting her: I think (ſaid ſhe, raiſing her Voice, that ſhe that follow'd might loſe nothing of what was ſaid) I ought no longer to doubt the Sincerity of my charming Friend: He has made no ſcruple of revealing to me the deareſt Secrets of his Soul: He confeſs'd that he formerly had a Tenderneſs for *Montamour*, which, till he ſaw me, he took for Love: He acknowledges a *Pity* for the Impreſſion which he finds his Vows of Courtſhip have made on her too-eaſy yielding Heart; but proteſts that he has of late deſiſted from giving her any Proofs of that Affection ſhe once flattered herſelf with; and that ſince his Acquaintance with me, he never has viſited her. I am certain he has not, reply'd *Du Lache*; and, in my opinion, you cannot have a greater Teſtimony of his Paſſion, than his abandoning a Maid of her Quality and Fortune;—— one, who in the Judgment of moſt People, is Miſtreſs of a thouſand Beauties and Accompliſhments; and unto whom, in ſpite of her Reſerve, he knows himſelf extremely dear. Poor Girl (reſum'd the malicious Baroneſs) I pity her: Her Condition is truly deplorable; for the engaging *Beauclair* has ſworn he never will ſee her more; and but this very Morn, among a Million of tender Proteſtations, bound the Promiſe he before had made me, with ſo ſolemn a Vow, that 'tis impoſſible he ſhould ever dare to ſpeak of her, to write to her, or even think of her again, with any thing beyond the common Civility of a Stranger. What paſs'd in the Soul of *Montamour* at hearing this Diſcourſe, and what ſhe endured in the Struggles of her Paſſions with her Diſcretion

cretion, can never be repreſented by Words: The Idea which one ought to conceive of her Sufferings would be leſſen'd by Deſcription; therefore, I ſhall only ſay that ſhe ſupported them with Life, but that was all, while the Baroneſs went on with her Perſecutions in this Manner: Another Proof of his Affection, reſum'd ſhe, and which I think a prodigious one, is the Uneaſineſs he expreſſes at my but ſpeaking to any other Man: He fancies the whole Creation are his Rivals, and envies even the Wind the Bleſſing of ſaluting me.——I will tell you a pleaſant thing of him (continued ſhe, laughing). He came to viſit me the other Day, and found the Marquis *de Sonville* with me: I knew his Thoughts, and could not forbear ſmiling, to ſee how awkwardly he conterfeited a Cheerfulneſs, till the Marquis's Page happening to bring him a Letter, he retir'd to the farther end of the Room to read it, and gave my impatient Lover an Opportunity to vent ſome Part of his *Chagrin*. A Pen and Ink ſtanding upon the Table, he immediately writ, blotting it out as ſoon as he had done,——O *Tortillée! Tortillée! Divine* as you are in all things elſe, in the Affairs of *Love* I fear you are but *mortal*, and liable to change! What, O what muſt then become of the unfortunate *Beauclair!* Her Invention, which was ſeldom at a Loſs when prompted either by her Intereſt or Ill-nature, would certainly have furniſhed her with many more Stories of this kind, if the coming of *Beauclair* had not put a ſtop to 'em. Tho' the Curioſity of ſeeing in what manner he would behave, had been the only Reaſon which had brought *Montamour* there, ſhe was now hindered from the Gratification of it. As ſubterranean Fires prey on their Manſion, and conſume with certain, though unſeen Deſtruction, the various and violent Agitations which raged in the Breaſt of this unhappy Lady, not having Liberty to vent themſelves, rolled ſtormy for a while, then growing too mighty for Reſtraint, diſdain'd all Bounds, and would have burſt in Exclamations ſuited to their Cauſe, had not her gentle

gentle Soul, entirely unaccuſtomed to ſuch Struggles, refus'd to obey the Dictates of her Fury; when ſhe was about to ſhew herſelf, to ſpeak, and to upbraid, ſhe loſt the Power; her Voice forſook her, and her every Senſe flew frighted at the Tempeſt, and left her Body motionleſs on the Earth: She ſaw the dear Undoer of her Quiet approach; —— She ſaw the deteſted Pair, whoſe Diſcourſe had plung'd her into ſuch Agonies, walk haſtily from the Place they were in to meet him; but what their Converſation was after he joined 'em, her Swoon depriv'd her of the means to obſerve.

They ſtaid not long in the Walk: The *Baroneſs* little ſuſpecting what had happened to *Montamour*, drew them immediately out of the *Tuilleries*; for tho' *Beauclair* addreſs'd her with all imaginable Complaiſance, and a vaſt deal of Gallantry, yet he was far from expreſſing himſelf with that prodigious Tenderneſs which ſhe would have her Rival believe.

Poor *Montamour* remain'd, for a conſiderable Time, in the Condition they had left her, and for want of Help join'd to the Coldneſs of the Earth, might, perhaps, never have recovered, if an unexpected Accident had not brought Monſieur *Galliard* to her Relief. He had been abroad that Night on an Intrigue, which having met with a Diſappointment in, he came thither thinking to indulge his *Chagrin*. Chance led him to the very Place where ſhe was lying: She was fallen quite croſs the Walk; ſo that, dark as it was, it was impoſſible for him to paſs, without perceiving ſomething in his way. The Oddneſs of the Adventure at firſt a little ſurpriz'd him: To find a Perſon whom, though her Face was hid, by ſome Jewels which glittered on her Breaſt, he gueſs'd to be a Woman of Faſhion, at ſuch an Hour, in ſuch a Place, and in ſuch a Poſture, made him begin to imagine that Fortune had deſigned him a Reparation for the Diſappointment he had lately met with: But he ſoon loſt that Hope, though to the Encreaſe of his Amazement, when kneeling down by her, and pulling back

back her Hoods, he diſcovered who ſhe was. The freſh Air immediately reſtored her to Life, but it was a good while before ſhe regain'd her Senſes: She knew not where ſhe was, nor who was preſent; and remembering nothing but the Cauſe which had thrown her into this Diſorder, frequently repeated the Names of *Beauclair*, *Tortillée*, and *Du Lache*; but in ſo wild and incoherent a Manner, that if *Galliard* had not been pretty well acquainted with the Reaſons ſhe had for Jealouſy, he could not have been able to gueſs 'em by her Words. The Reſpect he always paid her, and which, indeed, her Conduct exacted from every body, made him behave himſelf to her in a Manner very different to what he would have uſed to any other Woman in the like Circumſtance; and as he had a great deal of good Senſe, whenever he pleas'd to exert it, he made uſe of a great many fine Reaſonings to diſſuade her from giving way to the Suggeſtions of her Paſſions. She ſtood very little in need of his Advice, whenever ſhe had the Liberty of Thought; and now beginning to reſume it, was more angry with herſelf for the Indiſcretion her Curioſity had made her guilty of, than with thoſe who had occaſioned it. She knew *Galliard* to be of a Temper not much different from *Sansfoy*, and could not hope that this Adventure would be kept a Secret: She did not fail however to conjure him to it; and 'tis poſſible his extraordinary Eſteem for her might have oblig'd him to put a Conſtraint on his Inclinations, if an unexpected Accident had not diſcovered the whole Tranſaction without his Help.

DURING the Time that *Montamour* was in her Swoon, and that ſhe paſs'd in Diſcourſe with *Galliard*, which was ſeveral Hours (for though ſhe ſtole out of the Houſe without being taken notice of, ſhe knew not how to get into it in the ſame manner, and therefore was not over-haſty to be gone) *Beauclair* was entertained by the Baroneſs in the moſt ſplendid Manner that her Love, and the natural Profuſeneſs of her Temper could invent; and knowing that

that Wine is no ſmall Provocative to Deſire, ſhe had provided a vaſt Variety of the moſt choice ones; but not all ſhe could do was able to drive the Idea of *Montamour* from his Remembrance: In the Height of all the Gaiety with which *Tortillée* endeavour'd to divert him, he could not forbear reflecting with how much more ſolid Felicity he had paſs'd his Hours with the other; the more he ſaw of her Behaviour, the leſs careful he grew of diſguiſing it, and the more he found in it to diſeſteem. In ſpite of her well-acted Tenderneſs, and in ſpite of all her Inſtrument *Du Lache* had told him of her Sincerity, he could not conſider with what Facility ſhe had granted him the greateſt Favours, without a Suſpicion that others might alſo have the ſame Freedom. To enhance his Admiration, ſhe was perpetually telling him how many had ſought her Affection; and by what he knew of her Humour, had little Reaſon to believe their Labour had been in vain.—In fine, all her Actions, all her Words, ſerv'd only to ſhew him the prodigious Diſproportion which was between thoſe Charms ſhe would be thought to have, and thoſe *Montamour* was really poſſeſs'd of. Though theſe kind of Reflections came frequently into his Mind, yet they had greater Force this Night than ever. He grew exceſſive melancholy on the ſudden; and tho' both the Baroneſs and *Du Lache* took all imaginable Pains to exhilarate his Temper, their Endeavours were in vain; and finding it impoſſible for him to be any Company, begg'd Leave to retire. The Reader will eaſily imagine how much the Lady was alarm'd at a Behaviour ſo diſtant from her Expectations. She made uſe of all her Artifice, ſhe wept, entreated, counterfeited Swoonings, but all fail'd of the Effect ſhe aim'd at; and tho' *Du Lache* reminded him how uncourtly it was to leave a Lady who had received him in ſo generous a Faſhion, he perſiſted in his Reſolution, and only making a ſlight Excuſe, took Leave of her, accompany'd by *Du Lache*,

who

who would not part from him till he had found out the Meaning of this Alteration.

It ſeem'd as if the unuſual Sadneſs which ſeiz'd the Soul of *Beauclair*, and obliged him to quit the Baroneſs's Houſe ſo much ſooner than he intended, was influenced by *Fate*, on Purpoſe to bring him to a Place where he ſhould have a View of what would give him Torments pretty near equal to thoſe his late Deportment had inflicted on the diſconſolate *Montamour*. He paſs'd by the *Tuilleries* the very Moment that *Galliard* was conducting her out: She had too much Diſtraction in her Thoughts to have remembered to have pull'd down her Hoods, and it being now juſt Day-break, her whole Face appeared to the Eyes of her impatient Lover. In ſpite of all that *Du Lache*, *Toncarr*, and *Le Songe* had told him of her Perfidiouſneſs, he never could bring himſelf to a thorough Aſſurance of it; and there were ſome Moments in which he could not help believing all he had heard was falſe; but what Excuſes now could his Paſſion alledge againſt ſo poſitive an Appearance? To ſee her in a looſe *Diſhabilée*, at ſo irregular an Hour,——in ſuch a Place, and ſo accompany'd, was ſufficient to juſtify whatever her worſt Enemies could ſuggeſt to her Prejudice. *Du Lache*, though he was infinitely rejoiced at an Encounter which ſo unexpectedly favoured his Deſigns, was unwilling that *Beauclair* ſhould take notice of her; with Reaſon fearing, if they ſhould enter into a Converſation, it might produce ſomething which might ruin all, and perſuaded him to paſs without ſpeaking: But the other was too full of Rage to liſten to the Arguments this artful Villain was preparing to prevent him, and ſtepping haſtily to her, 'Tis an early Hour, Madam (ſaid he, with a Look and Geſture which ſufficiently teſtified his Diſorders) for Ladies, ſuch as a *Montamour*, to be abroad!——But I perceive you are not without a Guard, elſe I ſhould make an Offer of my Service to attend you. You have infinitely more agreeable Engagements on your Hands (anſwered ſhe,

coun-

counterfeiting an Air of Gaiety) and I think myſelf extremely happy in the Knowledge of your Humour, becauſe it gives me the Liberty of indulging my own. She ſpoke no more, nor indeed had ſhe the Power; the Pain ſhe ſuffer'd in reſtraining the ſtruggling Paſſions of her Soul, was very near throwing her again into that Condition from which *Galliard* had ſo lately recover'd her. Theſe few Words, however, had the Effect ſhe aim'd at, to ſting *Beauclair* to the Quick, and wholly unable to contain himſelf, If there be any thing like a Change in my Humour (reſum'd he, impatiently) *Montamour* ought, indeed to approve it, ſince I but follow an Example ſhe gave me. If ſhe had heard this, it might perhaps have made her reply in a Manner, which would have given him ſome Light into the Arts by which they both had been impos'd on: But her Agitations were too violent to permit her to ſtay; ſhe was remov'd ſeveral Paces from him, and he thought it would look like Mean-ſpiritedneſs to follow her, after what he had *ſeen*, which ſeem'd to be ſo great a Confirmation of all he had been *told*. In ſhort, both believing themſelves injur'd, each diſdain'd to do any thing which might appear like a Deſire of Reconciliation: And this little Pride, fatal alike to the Repoſe of both, gave the common Deceivers all the Opportunity they could wiſh to compaſs their pernicious Ends, of ſeparating two Hearts, which, by all the Ties of Gratitude and Tenderneſs, were thought to be cemented.

When *Montamour* was come home, and the firſt Emotions of her Paſſions a little abated, ſhe began to conſider with more Sedateneſs on this Adventure; and being unable to find any reaſonable Excuſe for *Beauclair*'s Behaviour, reſolv'd to tear him from her Heart: She foreſaw it would coſt her moſt terrible Pangs, but yet it muſt be done; and therefore the ſooner ſhe endeavour'd it, the better. But tho' ſhe found no great Difficulty in the forming this Reſolution, ſhe did in fixing on what Means ſhe ſhould make

make choice of for the Execution of it. To think to diſplace him by entertaining the Idea of any other Man, was vain; there was none who in the Perfections of either Mind or Body, could *vie* with the charming *Beauclair*, much leſs *exceed* him: Neither could ſhe hope that Variety of Company, or Diverſions, would ſo far amuſe her, as to make her forget him; but, on the contrary, more remind her how little, in Competition with the ſoft Hours of mutual Love, are thoſe paſs'd in that Hurry which the miſtaken World call Pleaſure. Such an Alteration in her Behaviour, ſhe conſider'd, might endanger her *Reputation*, but never reſtore her *Quiet*. Therefore, after many diſturb'd Reflections, a *Cloiſter* ſeem'd the only *Aſylum* where ſhe could hope for Peace; the Duties of Religion ſo ſtrictly practis'd in thoſe Places, the pious Examples, and heavenly Converſation of the holy *Siſterhood*, ſhe doubted not would ſet her Mind at Eaſe, and raiſe her Wiſhes beyond worldly Views. When ſhe conſider'd with what a Sublimity of Tenderneſs ſhe had regarded *Beauclair*, ſhe look'd upon it as a *Sin*, for which ſhe was juſtly puniſh'd in his *Inconſtancy:* She accuſed herſelf of Sacrilege, in paying to a *Mortal* that Adoration *Heaven* alone had Claim to, and vow'd to devote the remaining Part of her Life to Penitence for that Tranſgreſſion. She was extremely ſtrengthen'd in this Deſign by her *Confeſſor:* She had a large Fortune in her own Poſſeſſion, which, on her embracing a monaſtick Life, would be wholly employ'd in the Service of Mother-*Church*: of which he was too true a *Son*, to let ſlip ſo fair an Opportunity of Advantage: He magnify'd the Comforts of Retirement, and the innate Contentment which flows from an intire abandoning the World, in ſo florid and perſuaſive a Stile, that in ſpite of all that her Brother, and other Relations and Acquaintance, could do to diſſuade her, ſhe went into a Nunnery about four Leagues diſtant from *Paris*, fully determined to take Orders as ſoon as her Year of Probation ſhould be expired.

WHILE *Montamour* was thus employ'd in endeavouring to vanquiſh an Inclination ſhe thought ſo ill plac'd, *Beauclair* was uſing his utmoſt Efforts for a Conqueſt of the ſame Nature. Her Behaviour, when he met her with *Galliard*, made her appear more vile than even *Du Lache* and his Adherents had repreſented her: He could not think he had ever lov'd her, without being aſham'd of his Affection:—*Tortillée* ſeem'd now leſs faulty in his Opinion:——He believ'd her guilty of no other Failings than what were incident to her Sex; for if *Montamour* was falſe, he imagined all Women muſt be ſo. An honourable Paſſion was what, for the future, he reſolved to avoid, and being enter'd in an Amour with the Baroneſs, fancy'd he might paſs his Hours in her Company with as much Felicity, as in any others. To make the Favours he receiv'd from her as great a Bleſſing as poſſible, he took abundance of Pains to eſtabliſh a Tenderneſs in his Soul on her Account, like what he formerly had felt for *Montamour:* But how much did he deceive himſelf in ſuch an Attempt! the lovely Maid, all guilty as ſhe ſeem'd, maintain'd her Empire ſtill; the more he ſtruggled with his Chains, the more he found the Impoſſibility of breaking them; and what he endur'd in the Conflict between *Paſſion* and *Reſentment* was almoſt inſupportable. But, deſpiſing himſelf for what he thought ſo great a Weakneſs, he reſolv'd to do nothing that ſhould give the World Occaſion to ſuſpect what paſs'd within his Soul; and to that End, paid his Devoirs to the Baroneſs in a more aſſiduous Manner than he would have done, perhaps, had Inclination only prompted him.

THIS miſchievous Woman now exulted with a malicious Joy at the Knowledge of her *Rival*'s Grief; for, in ſpite of all that Lady's Caution, it was ſoon blaz'd abroad, that ſhe was miſerable in the Loſs of *Beauclair*. The Condition in which *Galliard* had found her in the *Tuilleries* was no Secret; for tho' the Eſteem he had for her oblig'd him to conceal her Name,

Name, it cou'd not reſtrain him from diverting himſelf and Companions with the Relation of ſuch an Adventure; and *Du Lache*, being with *Beauclair* when he was conducting her out, made him know it was ſhe herſelf, and not *Sansfoy*, who had come thither to obſerve the Baroneſs; ſo that between them the whole Affair ſoon grew the common Chat of every Tea-Table: And it was the Knowledge of being thus expos'd, which, doubtleſs, more than any thing made *Montamour* deaf to all the Perſuaſions of her Friends from a monaſtick Life. *Beauclair* was ſoon inform'd of her Reſolution; but whatever he felt within himſelf, ſeem'd little to regard it, and was in Reality not ſorry ſhe had taken Meaſures which wou'd render it impoſſible for him ever to let her know the Power ſhe had over him; and being allow'd, and indeed *courted* to take all imaginable Freedom with the Baroneſs, whoever had ſeen him with her wou'd have believ'd his Soul was wholly hers: But in ſpite of all the Pleaſure this wicked Woman conceiv'd in the Opinion ſhe was Miſtreſs of a Heart, the united Beauties of the whole Sex, without an equal Proportion of Wit and Virtue, was inſufficient to deſerve; in ſpite of the unequall'd, inexpreſſible Graces he was poſſeſs'd of, ſhe cou'd not reſolve to be his alone; *Sonville*, *St. Aumar*, *Le Sourbe*, and others, had the ſame Liberties with her as before; but, as I have already taken notice, ſhe had her particular Places of Aſſignation with them all, and *Beauclair* had not the leaſt Suſpicion of any Rivals in his Happineſs, and was pretty near an Infatuation equal to that her Artifices had wrought on the unhappy Baron.

THUS all things for a while went ſmoothly on, till one unhappy Day had like to have made a total Diſcovery of her Falſhood to him, whom it was moſt her Intereſt to deceive. *Beauclair*, as well as others of her Admirers frequently viſited her at home; and happening to come one Afternoon, and finding her in her Bed-chamber, no Company with her, the Baron abroad,

abroad, and ſhe in a looſe Undreſs (in which indeed ſhe look'd moſt amiable) he could not reſiſt a ſudden Inclination to make uſe of ſo favourable an Opportunity; and taking her in his Arms, and throwing her on the Bed, was about to repeat at *home* what many times ſhe had condeſcended to *abroad:* The Violence of his preſent Deſire, and the Extacy ſhe was in, to find him ſo much more than ordinarily tranſported, depriv'd them both of that Caution they were accuſtom'd to make uſe of: The Chamber-door was only careleſly put to; and the Baron chancing to return, and come into that very Room, was ſtruck with a Sight, which no other Witneſſes but his own Eyes cou'd have convinc'd him had been true. He would have drawn his Sword, and waſh'd the Stain they caſt upon his Honour with the Blood of both, but Aſtoniſhment took from him the Power. She was in a Poſture, ſuch as could have left no other Woman a Poſſibility of Excuſe; but ſo ready was ſhe at Invention, and ſo cunning in deceiving, that even in this, the greateſt Trial ſhe cou'd meet, ſhe brought herſelf off with a Dexterity which prov'd how much ſhe was Miſtreſs of the Art of Jilting: Her Face lying toward that Side of the Room where her Huſband enter'd, ſhe had an Opportunity of ſeeing him immediately; and before *Beauclair* could have any Imagination of the Truth, the Perſon who in his Arms that Moment was uttering Raptures, amaz'd him, on a ſudden, with ſtruggling to get looſe, and crying out, *Help! O help!—a Rape!*—Where are my Servants?——Will none come to my Aſſiſtance?——For Heaven's Sake, Monſieur, deſiſt:—I'll rather die than live to wrong the beſt of Men and Huſbands. Then diſengaging herſelf from his Embrace, and running to the Baron (pretending not to have ſeen him before) O my dear Lord! (ſaid ſhe) how opportunely are you come to ſave me from Diſhonour, from Ruin, from *Death*; for ſure I would have flown for Refuge to the *latter*, rather than have endur'd

dur'd the *former*. The barbarous Man (added ſhe, burſting into well-diſſembled Tears) would have depriv'd me of all I value Life for:—He would have violated my Innocence,——corrupted my Duty,—made me utterly unworthy of my dear Lord's Affection; — and finding his impious Perſuaſions were in vain, he would have *forc'd* me to the horrid Deed,——a Deed my Soul abhors!——a Deed which muſt have made me hateful both to Heaven and Earth!—Oh! had I not been inſpir'd for ſome Moments with an unuſual Strength, and had not my Heart's Treaſure, my dear, dear *Baron*, come to my Aſſiſtance juſt when that Strength began to fail, how wretched had I been!——O be ever prais'd, ye Saints and Angels!—ye miniſtring Spirits, the Guardians of my Honour, for your Protection in this dreadful Hour —— O ſtill continue watchful o'er your Charge, and ſave me ever from Infamy and Guilt! She fell on her Knees, and pronounc'd theſe laſt Words in ſo pathetic a Manner, and with a Countenance ſo exactly ſuited to every thing ſhe ſaid, that *Beauclair* was much more ſtartled at her Impiety and Diſſimulation than he had been, when, riſing from the Bed, he perceiv'd who it was that occaſioned it. The Scene muſt certainly have been pleaſant enough to obſerve, if any diſintereſted Perſon had been Witneſs of it: To behold a couple of Men ſtand gazing on each other, without Power of Speech or Motion, while a Woman was acting over a thouſand various Paſſions in Geſtures and Grimaces, ſuited to them all;—ſometimes rejoicing at the *Deliverance* ſhe pretended to have had; — ſometimes feigning to look back with Horror on her paſt *Danger*; — now *weeping*, as it were, thro' Tenderneſs;—then *exclaiming* againſt the Baſeneſs of Mankind;—with one Breath *curſing* her own Charms, for being the Occaſion of inſpiring looſe Deſires;——and with the next, *bleſſing* Heaven for giving her the Means of reſiſting them. The Surpriſe which both the Husband and Lover were in, gave her ſufficient Opportunity to

exerciſe her Talent; but as *Beauclair* was Maſter of a much greater Preſence of Mind than the Baron, ſo he recollected himſelf much ſooner; and perceiving the Lady was very capable of making her Party good with her believing Husband, thought, in ſuch a Circumſtance, the moſt prudent Action he could do was to retire. The firſt thing he had done, after he ſtarted from the Bed, was to ſnatch up his Sword, not doubting but he ſhould have Occaſion to make uſe of it; but finding he was not immediately called to the Account he expected, took the Advantage of the *Baron*'s Confuſion, and left him to adjuſt Matters with his Spouſe, as they ſhould agree it between them, only telling him, as he went out of the Room, that if he imagin'd himſelf injur'd, he knew where to demand Satisfaction. He ſtaid not for an Anſwer; nor had the other recovered himſelf enough, as yet, to make one. He continued, for ſome Moments after *Beauclair* was gone, fix'd in the ſame ſtupid Poſture he had been in ever ſince he came into the Room; till, at laſt, the hurried Spirits beginning by little and little to reſume their proper Stations, he fetch'd a deep Sigh, and breaking from his Wife, who had all this while been holding him in her Arms, walk'd haſtily to and fro, by that Action only diſcovering the inward Diſorders that oppreſs'd him: But what is it that is not in the Power of a Perſon belov'd to accompliſh? What a commanding force there dwells in Tears, when flowing from the Eyes we worſhip! They give the Lye to Reaſon, and make our very Senſes but unavailing Witneſſes, when oppos'd to any thing they would inſinuate. The tender-hearted *Baron* at firſt teſtified the ſecret Yieldings of his Soul but by a Look; but ſhe, who perfectly underſtood the Language of the Eyes, immediately knew her Work was more than half compleated; and aſſuming an Air all full of Languiſhment and Softneſs, I have liv'd too long, (ſaid ſhe, in a dying, trembling Accent) I have liv'd too long, ſince my dear Lord, the only Man, Heaven knows, I ever wiſh'd to pleaſe, regards me with

with Indifference:——Is this dumb Coldneſs, or this diſtant Poſture a Proof of that Paſſion you have ſworn ſhould be unchangeable, or a fit Welcome for a Wife, reſcued by Providence from threaten'd Ruin? O my only Dear, my Love, my Life, my Husband, continued ſhe, (ſeizing his Hand, and clapping it to her Mouth with a well-counterfeited Tranſport) take, take me to your Breaſt, or kill me. There needed no more to make the poor *Baron* quite beſides himſelf; his Soul, before overcome by ſoft Emotions, now quite diſſolv'd and melted in a Sea of Tenderneſs: He claſp'd the Syren in his faithful Arms, kiſs'd her diſſembling Lips; and while he ſpoke the fondeſt, moſt endearing Words that Tongue e'er utter'd, or Heart e'er conceiv'd, a Flood of honeſt Tears ſtream'd from his Eyes, and bath'd her treacherous Boſom. O thou art all divine, cry'd he, in a Rapture, all Angel! thy *Mind*, like thy bright *Body*, charming! pure and untainted with any of the Frailties of thy Sex! dear to *Reaſon*, and raviſhing to *Senſe!* And then again, Let me no longer live than I adore thee, (purſued the affectionate Deluded) thou Excellence!—thou lovely Abſtract of all that's good in Woman! 'Tis not to be doubted but that ſhe anſwered thoſe tender Expreſſions, and returned the Careſſes he gave her, in a manner which ſeemed to him to proceed from, at leaſt, an equal Ardency; and this Accident was ſo far from leſſening her in his Eſteem, that it made her, if poſſible, dearer than before. He was too little acquainted with Artifice himſelf, to imagine there was a Poſſibility for the Woman he ador'd to be Miſtreſs of ſo much: The entire Confidence he always had of her Love and Virtue was now in as full force as ever; and all thoſe Notions which had crouded into his Soul at his firſt coming into the Chamber, and beholding ſo unexpected, and, indeed, ſo diſtracting a Sight, now vaniſhed, and were no more remember'd. *Love*, now triumphant Love! unmix'd with Fears, with Jealouſies, or Doubts, blaz'd with almighty Luſtre, and ſtruck all other

Remonſtrance dead. He thought he look'd into her very Soul, and found it all Perfection: Nothing that he could wiſh were altered, except a little too much Freedom and Condeſcenſion in her Behaviour, which, tho' he believ'd altogether innocent and undeſign'd, yet he thought might have encourag'd *Beauclair* to hope great Favours. He did not fail to acquaint her what his Sentiments were on that Score, and conjur'd her for the Sake of his eternal Quiet, and her own Honour and Reputation, to endeavour to wear a more diſtant and reſerved Air in her Converſation with thoſe Men, whoſe Principles ſhe was not perfectly aſſur'd of. This Advice, tho' accompanied with ten thouſand ſoft Profeſſions, and given with the greateſt Complaiſance, reliſh'd but ill with her who 'twas applied to; but ſhe had Policy enough to conceal her Chagrin, pretended to think as he did, and aſſur'd him, in all the ſeeming good Humour imaginable, that for the future ſhe would be more wary. But from that Moment ſhe conceiv'd an inexpreſſible Hatred for him: If he had Eyes to ſee a Failing in her Conduct, ſhe knew not, but in Time, he might gather Courage to condemn or to controul it; and the bare thoughts that there was a Poſſibility ſhe might one Day be debarr'd from taking the Liberties ſhe now enjoy'd, made her almoſt diſtracted: If this meddling Husband was to be no more *blinded*, he muſt be *remov'd*. *Murder* was now the Employment of her Thoughts, and ſeem'd ſo abſolutely neceſſary for the Security of her Pleaſures, that ſhe found no Shock, or ſuch as ſhe could eaſily paſs over, in reſolving to undertake it; and ſhe would moſt certainly have found ſome Means to perpetrate her horrid Intentions, if her Agent in all miſchievous Enterprizes, *Du Lache*, had not adviſ'd her to another, tho' almoſt as *execrable*, yet a leſs *dangerous* Method of getting rid of him. He procur'd a Potion compos'd of ſuch pernicious Drugs, that tho' it would not abſolutely deſtroy Life, and drive the Soul from her tormented Habitation, yet it had that unhappy

Effect

Effect on all the ſenſitive Faculties, as to reduce the Perſon who ſhould ſwallow it to a Condition little preferable to that of an Idiot.

THIS curſed Mixture did that Monſter of a Woman give to her unſuſpecting Husband; and while his tender, truly generous Soul was wholly taken up with the Study how to pleaſe her, himſelf was ſinking into the moſt miſerable State that Hell bred Miſchief could invent. At firſt he was ſeiz'd with a Lethargy of Thought; a kind of lazy Stupefaction hung on his Spirits, which every Day encreaſing, at laſt overwhelm'd the Throne of Reaſon; Reflection was unhing'd; the noble Seat of Memory fill'd with Chimæra's and disjointed Notions; wild and confus'd Ideas whirl'd in his diſtracted Brain; and all the Man, except the Form, was chang'd.

THE *Baroneſs*'s ſhameful Conduct was too viſible to the World for any body to wonder at her Huſband's Frenzy; and tho' every one pitied the Condition they ſaw him in, yet there was none that had the leaſt Suſpicion ſhe had made uſe of any other Means to bring him into it, than what was publick. She ſuffer'd him to continue a few Days in Town after his *Delirium*; but then, under the Pretence that Change of Air might be of Service, ſent him down to a little Village about forty Miles from *Paris*, where ſhe had him boarded at a cheap Rate out of his large Eſtate, ſcarce affording him the common Neceſſaries of Life.

NOW all the gay, looſe Part of her Acquaintance of both Sexes, which, to pleaſure him for a little Time, ſhe had pretended to diſcard, returned with uſual Freedom to her Houſe: Her Drawing-Room was every Day fill'd with Viſitants, her Antichamber with Muſicians, and her Hall with Attendants: The whole Dwelling became a Scene of Luxury;—Dancing, Singing, Playing, Drinking, Feaſting, all that could charm the Senſe might here be found in full Profuſeneſs of Satiety. But tho' theſe Entertainments were raviſhing to moſt of the Company they were

prepar'd for, *Beauclair* had no reliſh for 'em: His Morals were too excellent, and his Soul too much refin'd and delicate, to be pleas'd with thoſe groſs Debaucheries he daily ſaw acted there. The *Baroneſs*, whom a long time he had but little eſteem'd, eſpecially ſince that monſtrous Diſſimulation with which he was Witneſs ſhe treated her Husband, now appear'd odious in his Eyes: His good Manners would not permit him to deſiſt wholly from viſiting her; but he never ſtaid long, and went not ſo often as he had been accuſtom'd. He made no ſcruple of letting *Du Lache* know his Sentiments, when he was ask'd by him the Reaſon of eſtranging himſelf. But the other took not now the Pains he had done to conceal the *Baroneſs*'s Vices: He knew that *Beauclair* was now grown as indifferent to her as any of his Predeceſſors, or Cotemporaries; and that to preſerve his good Opinion was a thing ſhe gave herſelf not the leaſt Concern about. All the Thoughts of this inconſtant Woman were at preſent taken up with young *La Branch*, one of the moſt vain, conceited Coxcombs in the Town; one who had no other Merit, no other Charm, than his being a new Conqueſt, to engage her; tho', worthleſs as he was, there was a Girl, to whom he formerly had made court, that valued his Converſation at a very high rate, and endeavoured by Letters, Meſſages, and all the Stratagems that her Paſſion could invent, to retrieve the fickle Heart of this ungrateful Lover. The Knowledge that there was a Rival in the Way, always made the *Baroneſs*'s Deſires more eager: To give *Diſquiet* to her *own* Sex, heighten'd her Satisfaction in the Enjoyment of the *other*. She was of that *malicious*, one may juſtly ſay, indeed, *deviliſh* Diſpoſition, that her chief *Pleaſure* conſiſted in the inflicting Pain; wanting the Poignancy of *Revenge*, not all the Joys that *Love* affords (warm as her Inclinations were) had any Reliſh. The Embraces of a God, *unenvy'd*, would have been taſteleſs and inſipid: No longer than his Engagement with another kept her

in

in Suſpenſe, was the Marquis *de Sonville* the Object of her Affection: When the Continuance of *St. Aumar*'s Addreſſes to her, render'd him deſpis'd by all the other Women of his Acquaintance, he became immediately ſo by her; and her Apprehenſions of *Montamour* no ſooner were remov'd, than *Beauclair* was diſregarded: A kind Look from that inſignificant Trifler, *La Branche*, was now of greater Value with her than all the Careſſes of theſe accompliſh'd Gentlemen. The unfortunate young Creature that lov'd him, was now the Sacrifice which her inſatiate Pride requir'd; and the whole Time and Invention of *Du Lache* was now employ'd in Means to compaſs it.

But how fond ſoever the Baroneſs was of a *new* Intrigue, Heaven never form'd a Man whoſe Charms could oblige her to diſcontinue any of her *former* ones, nor was ſhe ever ſo much overwhelmed in Paſſion as not to know how to conceal it, whenever ſhe found Occaſion: Whenever any *one* of her Admirers took Notice that ſhe regarded *another* with more Tenderneſs than he approv'd of, ſhe had a Method of ſilencing his Doubts as *artful* as it was *baſe*; ſhe pretended that the Perſon ſuſpected was only indulg'd by her in ſome little Freedoms, to take off all Imagination of a real Amour between him and a *certain Lady* of her Acquaintance; and then, if preſs'd to it, would frame a long Story of ſome Woman, no Matter who, but any body that came into her Head at that Time, was made the Property to bear her Shame: The Truth is, indeed, ſhe kept no Company, whom any thing ſhe ſaid could make appear much worſe than in Reality they were. By this Means ſhe prevented any Quarrels from ariſing between her Lovers, and preſerv'd to herſelf a Reputation with them which ſhe was very far from deſerving. She was alſo extremely indebted to her good Fortune, that all this while, among ſo many, ſhe had hitherto to do only with Men whoſe Honour would not permit them to boaſt of a Lady's Favours: And ſomething too, I think, ſhe ow'd to their Want of Penetration, as well

as her own Artifice, that ſhe could ſo long and ſo eaſily impoſe on their Judgments.

If *La Branche* had been of the ſame Diſpoſition and Principles with the others, ſhe might, perhaps, have retained the good Opinion of them all ſomething longer than ſhe did; but that Wretch was too much elevated with his good Fortune, in being belov'd by a Woman of the Baroneſs's Quality, to conceal it: He talk'd of her wherever he came, toaſted her as a Miſtreſs, read her Letters publickly, and was ſo careleſs in putting them up, as to loſe two of 'em; which happening to fall into the Hands of an Intimate of the Marquis *de Sonville*, were immediately brought to him. Never was any Surpriſe ſuperior to that of that Gentlemen, when he found what they contain'd; nor Rage equal to that he flew into, at reflecting on the Indignity ſhe offer'd to his Merit; for in the whole Courſe of his Amour with her, never had ſhe made a more paſſionate Declaration of Love to him, than he now found ſhe had done to *La Branche:* The more he conſider'd on the worthleſſneſs of the Fellow, the more he grew enrag'd; and reſolving to be reveng'd on her Meanneſs of Spirit, on her Perfidy and Ingratitude, ſet himſelf to ſtudy what Meaſures he ſhould take to expoſe her, and make her appear as vile and as deteſtable to the whole World, as ſhe was grown to him. His Reſentment ſoon inſpir'd him with a Thought lucky enough for his Purpoſe: He knew that the next Day was that on which ſhe kept her Aſſembly, and had generally a greater Affluence of Company on that than any other Day: He went not till it was pretty late, that he believed they were all met, becauſe he was deſirous to have as many Witneſſes as poſſible of what he did. He came into the Room with his uſual Gaiety of Air, entirely diſſembling his Chagrin; and ſtepping up to the Baroneſs, who was at a little Table buſily engag'd at *Ombre* with *St. Aumar* and the young Count *de la Torre*: I thought, Madam, ſaid he to her, after having looked round the Room,

and

and ſeen he was not there) to have found Monſieur *La Branche* among this good Company: By Accident ſome Letters directed for him have fallen into my Poſſeſſion, and I would willingly have reſtored 'em. For Heaven's Sake let me ſee them, cry'd the jealous *Baroneſs*, preſently imagining they had been ſent to him by her Rival. No, Madam, reply'd the *Marquis*, ſince your Curioſity would lead you to examine the Contents, I will ſave you the Trouble, and read them myſelf aloud, that all here may partake of the Diverſion they will afford. He had no ſooner ſpoke, than all the Gentlemen and Ladies in the Room, among whom were Monſieur *Beauclair* and old *Le Sourbe*, flock'd to the Place where he was ſtanding, and prepar'd to give Attention, while he pull'd one of the Letters out of his Pocket, and began to read as follows:

To the Deareſt of Mankind, the lovely and accompliſh'd LA BRANCHE.

HOW *can you pretend to Love, and yet deny me the only Joy I have in Life! What Excuſe can you make for not coming as you promis'd? The* Day, *indeed, that curs'd deteſted Thing call'd* Buſineſs *may engroſs, but* Love *and* I *might ſurely claim the* Night! ———

He was not permitted to proceed: The *Baroneſs*, who from the firſt Word had diſcovered a ſtrange Uneaſineſs and Confuſion in her Behaviour, now ſtarted from her Chair, and running to him, and endeavouring to ſnatch the Paper out of his Hand: Hold, my Lord, ſaid ſhe, trembling with the inward Diſorders of her Soul; I conjure you by all you fear *above*, or love *below*, not to expoſe the Contents of that Letter. Your Ladyſhip is unkind, (interrupted *De la Torre*, who knew her well enough to gueſs the Reaſon of her Concern) we have all Cauſe to complain of your Want of Good-nature, in endeavouring

to deprive us of an Entertainment which the Marquis promiſes ſo much Diverſion in. I cannot (reſumed ſhe, recollecting herſelf as much as poſſible) ſuffer the Secret of my Friend to be divulg'd.——That Letter is from a Woman I entirely love; and tho' I writ it for her to prevent any Diſcovery, yet 'tis poſſible ſome here, by the Contents, may gueſs the Perſon.——I doubt not, Madam (anſwered the *Marquis*) but that every body will; but, (purſu'd he, ironically) I have ſo vaſt a Regard for the Baroneſs *de Tortillée*, that I cannot conſent to bury in Obſcurity ſo uncommon a Proof of her good Nature, as the ſigning her *own Name* to a Complaint ſuch as this. How! cry'd all the Company with one Voice, her *own Name!* and immediately a loud Laughter enſued among the Women, and Signs of an univerſal Conſternation among the *Men*. The revengeful *Marquis* obſerv'd it with Pleaſure, and was about to go on with the Letter; but the *Baroneſs*, quite beſides herſelf with Paſſion, ſtill ſtruggling to get it from him, for ſome Moments retarded his Deſign, till finding her continue obſtinate, he thought fit to ſhew that he was reſolv'd to be ſo too; and holding it above her Reach, and gently putting her off, 'Twere too much, Madam, (reſum'd he, with a malicious Smile) to do ſo much for the Service of a Friend, and yet be denied the Praiſes due to ſo elevated a Sincerity!—You muſt and ſhall receive the Glory which your Actions merit; and if you *now* prevent me, the publick News-Papers *to-morrow* ſhall proclaim your Virtues. 'Twould be impoſſible to repreſent the Violence of her Rage, when ſhe found, that neither Entreaties nor Commands were of Force to oblige him to ſtifle this Teſtimony of her Infamy: She rav'd like one diſtracted; call'd him ten thouſand Villains; and perceiving herſelf on the very Brink of being expos'd in the moſt ſhameful Manner imaginable, no Hope from Artifice, no Relief from Diſſimulation, ſhe threw the Mask of Softneſs off; unheard of Curſes iſſued from her Mouth; her Eyes ſhot Fire; in all

her Air the Fury ſtood confeſs'd; and quitting the *Marquis*, and looking wildly round on the reſt of the Company, (who waited with Impatience for the End of this Adventure) and ſeeing none offer to aſſiſt her in wreſting this fatal Paper from the Hand that held it, ſhe flew out of the Room, wiſhing eternal Damnation on 'em all. The Indignation and Confuſion ſhe expreſs'd, was ſo great a Gratification of the *Marquis*'s Spleen, that he had certainly follow'd her to proſecute the Raillery he had ſo tormentingly began; but that, fully to ſatiate his Revenge, it was neceſſary he ſhould ſtay where he was, ſince he could never meet with a fitter Opportunity than what offered at preſent, for the making her appear what ſhe really was before ſo many Perſons, ſome of which he knew would not fail to blaze it: And every body crouding about him, he immediately proceeded with the Letter, which continu'd to declare the Paſſion it began with, in theſe Words:

Languiſhing for your Approach, and all diſſolving in the pleaſing Expectation of thoſe Joys your dear-lov'd Preſence brings, ſome Hours ſlid ſoft away; but when the Time was paſs'd, what Horror! what inconceivable Inquietudes enſu'd! My Heart, ſo lately the Seat of Rapture, was now fill'd with racking Doubts, and torturing Jealouſy! —— What ſhall I do? —— I am wild with Apprehenſion; ——the Memory of paſt Delights, *but heightens* preſent Woes: ——O La Branche! *ſhou'd you, indeed, forſake me, not* Hell *contains a Wretch more curſt than I.—But ſure it cannot be! —— That lovely Form can harbour no Deceit. —'Twas my ill Fortune, but not thy Fault, that all the Night my longing Arms were ſtretch'd in vain to graſp thee. Thy Soul, I know, thy Wiſhes, all were mine!—Make haſte, my Love, my Life! My Angel, make haſte to give and take ſuch Joys, as but in* Idea *to the vulgar World are known, tho'* real *and* ſubſtantial *to the charming* La Branche, *and his*

Paſſionately fond

TORTILLEE.

Mr-

METHINKS, ſaid the Marquis, here is neither Want of Paſſion or Softneſs in this Billet, to make the Author aſham'd of its being read; but this is nothing to what this Prodigy of her Sex can do!—Here is (continu'd he) a Teſtimony of her Abilities, in which ſeveral of this Company have ſome Concern.——In ſpeaking theſe Words, he took out the other Letter, and without ſtaying to hear what Reply any body would make, added to the Surpriſe they were already in, by the reading theſe Lines.

To my Soul's Treaſure, the moſt adorable LA BRANCHE.

IF Jealouſy betokens Love, how happy ſhould I think myſelf in receiving ſo many Proofs of yours? But ſay, thou dear Deſtroyer of my Peace! charming Unbeliever! ſay, what muſt I do to convince thee that I am,——*that I* can *be only thine!*——*Oh! didſt thou know thyſelf, thy own unequall'd Charms were a ſufficient Security for my Truth!—What is there in Man deſirable, that my* La Branche *does not poſſeſs in ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed a Degree, that the whole Sex beſide are worthleſs Nothings when compar'd with him!—You ſeem to make it an Occaſion of Complaint, that I admit of ſo much Company; but tell me, how can I avoid it?—How can a Woman of my Quality, without becoming the Subject of Ridicule, refuſe the Viſits of Perſons of her own Rank, and who call themſelves her Husband's Friends? That hated fatal Tie, alas! obliges me to many Things contrary to my Inclination: Beſides, as he is now from Home, and under that unhappy Indiſpoſition, which all, but me, lament, ſhould I deny the Converſation of thoſe he eſteem'd, and thoſe whom I can find no plauſible Pretence for breaking with, would it not be evident enough to the judging World, 'twas for the Sake of ſome dear unknown Favourite I did ſo? By a promiſcuous Acquaintance I ſhun the Infamy of being too fond of* one; *and 'tis by this*

Method alone that I can ſecure my Love *and my* Reputation. *It is for thee!——for thee! lovely, cruel Suſpector, as thou art! for one dear, undiſturb'd, untalk'd of Hour with thee, I undergo the uneaſy Taſk of diſſembling in Publick! and to conceal my real Tenderneſs for* thee, *wear a pretended one to* all!—— *Methinks you ſhou'd approve an Act of Prudence ſo convenient for us both, and ought to know me better than to imagine I am ſo loſt to Honour, or have a Soul ſo little delicate, as to ſtoop to a* Plurality *of Amours.* —— *No, no, I am for nothing leſs than the moſt Excellent of his Sex!—— to vanquiſh a Heart, till now a Foe profeſs'd to Love, and all its tender Follies, and triumph over a Virtue eſtabliſh'd like mine, it was neceſſary there ſhould be a* La Branche! *Thoſe whom your groundleſs Fears point out as* Rivals, *either becauſe their* Quality *obliges me to treat them with a greater Share of Civility than I do others, or becauſe you conſider them as Men of more* Merit *than the Generality of thoſe you have ſeen with me, are, in Reality, the Objects of my Averſion and Diſdain; if there be any thing like Perfection in any of them, 'tis hid amidſt a Crowd of Faults: The Count* de la Torre *has indeed ſome Wit and Spirit, but then he is inſufferably inſolent, robuſt, and vain:* —— *Moſt People allow that the Chevalier* St. Aumar *has Good-nature, and an agreeable Perſon, but at the ſame time make a Jeſt of his Underſtanding: Thoſe who are pleas'd with the* bon Mien *and Air of the Marquis* de Sonville, *deſpiſe him for his Pride and Oſtentation:* — Beauclair's *refin'd Manner of Converſation, good Addreſs, and Sublimity of Genius, can never make Amends for his Want of Sincerity, and Affectation of a Paſſion for* all *Women, which he has not Stability of Temper enough to make him truly feel for* one, *any more than old* Le Sourbe's *Wealth can counterbalance his other Deficiencies.* ——— *Wretches! Wretches! all unworthy of* your Fears, *as they are of* my Regard, *and, with my* Huſband, *equally* odious *to my Soul's fond Wiſhes.* —— *Name them no more, unleſs you'd have all Deſire in me grow ſick, and at your next Embrace*

brace receive into your Arms a ſenſeleſs Log inſtead of

Your moſt Tranſported,

Melting, Longing, Dying

TORTILLEE.

THE Marquis had no ſooner concluded the reading this Epiſtle, than every Mouth in the Company was opening to expreſs the various Sentiments which the hearing it inſpir'd in each of them: But Count *De la Torre*, whoſe Soul had burn'd with fierce Impatience from the Mention made of him, got the Start of all the reſt, in revenging on her Character the Reflection ſhe had made on his; and as he was naturally paſſionate, and a little regardleſs of the Reputation of thoſe Women that put themſelves in his Power, now thinking there was not the leaſt Obligation for Secrecy, ſaid enough to let every body know, that ſhe once took as much Pains to convince *him* of her Sincerity, as now ſhe did *La Branche*. The Marquis *de Sorville* was not more generous; but Monſieur *Le Sourbe* and the Chevalier ſpoke not a Word. Both theſe Gentlemen had bore a true Affection to the Baroneſs, and were too much confounded at theſe ſtrange and unexpected Diſcoveries of her Perfidy, to be able to reply to any thing that was ſaid. *Beauclair* obſerv'd it; and tho' he never knew what it was to feel a ſerious Paſſion for her, was as much nettled as the other; but he diſſembled his Chagrin, and putting on a Countenance which had more in it of Diſdain than Anger, For my Part, ſaid he, I find no Cauſe of Wonder, but the Sight of yours: My Acquaintance with this Lady has been of a much ſhorter Date than moſt of yours, yet in the little Time I have convers'd with her, I have ſeen enough not to be ſurpris'd at this Teſtimony of the Levity of her Temper: Thoſe two Gentlemen (continu'd he, pointing to *St. Aumar* and *Le Sourbe*) have, perhaps, been ignorant of each other's Happineſs:

neſs: Each believ'd himſelf the only favour'd, and glory'd in a Self-Sufficiency of being able to pleaſe the *Conſtant*, the *Diſtinguiſhing Tortillée*. The *Conſtant*, the *Diſtinguiſhing Tortillée*, as yourſelf once thought her, good Monſieur, interrupted a pert Lady, (who ſtood near him, and who from *Sanſoy* had learn'd the whole Secret,) do not imagine that your Intrigue with her has been inviſible to all Eyes but your own: The whole Town knows ſhe has had Arts to blind even the diſcerning *Beauclair*, or he wou'd not, for her Sake, have abandon'd ſo deſerving a Woman as *Montamour*. True, Madam, true, (ſaid a Gentleman that was by,) that unhappy Lady you mention'd had not been reduc'd to ſo ſad a Condition as Monſieur *Galliard* found her in the *Tuilleries*, if the Baroneſs had never ſeem'd more worthy of Regard; nor had ſhe forſook the World for a Cloyſter, if Monſieur *Beauclair* had always profeſs'd the ſame Indifferency as now. That is an Affair of which no body is ignorant, added another. Yet, reſum'd the Lady that ſpoke firſt, he has been as much deceiv'd in believing it a Secret, as he was in the Fidelity of his Miſtreſs. There were ſeveral in the Room, of both Sexes, that ſeconded the Raillery ſhe had begun on this Score; and *Beauclair*, who from the firſt Mention of *Montamour* had been ſtruck with Remorſe, and a kind of Self Condemnation, cou'd not preſently recover his Preſence of Mind, ſo far as to be able to anſwer them; and it was but with an half-aſſur'd Accent that he at laſt brought forth theſe Words: —— I know not well what 'tis you mean, *(ſaid he)* Madamoiſelle *Montamour*, by all I ever ſaw of her Behaviour, was never ambitious of becoming a publick Chat: She is a Woman I ever *did*, and ever *ſhall* eſteem: The Town is ſenſible I ſhou'd have marry'd her, had ſhe been ſo diſpos'd; but whatever Accident has happen'd to occaſion our eternal Separation, I ſhou'd be ſorry to think any one ſhou'd imagine a Bar ſo weak as the Baroneſs *de Tortillée*'s Artifices ſhou'd have Power to do it. Notwithſtanding

ſtanding his Belief to the contrary, there were too many preſent that were acquainted with the Story to have let it reſt ſo, if the Marquis *de Sonville*, willing in this grand Aſſembly of the beſt Part of her Acquaintance, to expoſe the *Baroneſs* as much as poſſible, had not turn'd the Converſation on the two ſilent Gentlemen, *St. Aumar* and *Le Sourbe*. It was a good while before one Word cou'd be got from them; but when they ſpoke, it was in a Faſhion which convinc'd the whole Company of what they before had Cauſe enough to ſuſpect, that the Gratitude for Favours ſhe had conferr'd, and the Aſtoniſhment at the Diſcovery of any others being Partakers in that Happineſs, each of them had the Vanity to believe he had engroſs'd, had, till now, depriv'd them of the Power of Utterance. If the *Marquis*'s Deſire of Revenge had been rais'd by ſomething more injurious than the petty Misfortune of a Miſtreſs's Falſhood, he found enough to gratify it: Every body now took the Liberty of ſpeaking what they knew; and there being ſcarce one Perſon in the Room that was not privy to one, or more of her Intrigues, each now contributed their Part, and the whole Scene of all her monſtrous Actions was laid open to them all. Never was Woman ſo expos'd and ridicul'd,——ſo deſpis'd and hated: Some took ſo great a Pleaſure in affronting her, and the reſt ſo little regarded her Reſentment, that the being within her Houſe, and probably within her Hearing, did not in the leaſt hinder them from ſaying all that ſo ample a Field of Scandal to indulge in, could give Room to; till *Harriot*, the *Baroneſs*'s chief Woman coming in, told them her Lady was very much indiſpos'd, and not being able to return to the Company, deſir'd they would diſmiſs. We'll ſend *La Branche* to comfort her *(ſaid the* Marquis *tartly.)* Ay, my Lord! *(purſu'd the* Count*)* he has an Art of pleaſing, to which, it ſeems, we are Strangers. However, let us not add to the Schedule of our Faults, that of Ingratitude: Beſure you tell the Lady, continu'd he, turning to

to *Harriot*, That *de la Torre*, and the other Gentlemen, ſhe ſo handſomely gave a Deſcription of, are infinitely obligated to her for the Pains ſhe has taken to clear them of an Affair, of which none of them would be proud. No, no, cry'd *Beauclair*, let *La Branche* poſſeſs alone the unenvied Happineſs. *Tortillée* and *La Branche (reſum'd the* Marquis*)* are only capable of pleaſing each other, and indeed are only fit for one another, as this Fellow! *(continued he, taking hold of* Du Lache, *who that Inſtant came into the Room, and giving him a ſcornful Turn)* this Pimp! this wretched Pander! is only fit for the vile Offices he is employ'd in. ——— O forbear, my Lord *(interrupted* de la Torre, *with an Air and Voice full of Deriſion)* this ingenious Gentleman but wears the Livery of the munificent *Baroneſs*, and muſt obey the Hand which feeds him! — If he has made uſe of any Stratagems to deceive you, or me, or any here, 'twas to ſerve a Miſtreſs who liberally rewarded the Procurer of her Pleaſures: For my Part, I confeſs, tho' he has favour'd me ſometimes with a Summons, not much unlike what juſt now your Lordſhip read, I never had Gratitude enough to make him any other Retribution than barren Thanks: Nor, perhaps, have any of you, Meſſieurs, been more bountiful: I think the leaſt we can do, to recompence the Obligations he has conferr'd on us, is to recommend him to the Service of ſome *Italian Courtezan*, in whoſe Amours he would ſtand in admirable Stead, and 'tis probable, pick up for himſelf a more laſting Subſiſtence, than he can hope for from the precarious Dependance of his preſent Benefactreſs, whoſe *Charms* begin now to grow out of Date, and almoſt of as little Reputation as her *Virtue*. As crafty as the Villain was in making almoſt any Appearances ſubſervient to his Ends, when he had Time for Deliberation, theſe ſudden and unexpected Salutations entirely bereft him of all Artifice; he was now as harmleſs, as undeſigning as a Fool: He was, indeed, two or three times

times about to ſpeak, though he knew not what to ſay: He found that the Secret of the Baroneſs's Temper, and the Hand he had in her Conduct, were diſcover'd; but had neither Time to gueſs by what Means, nor to contrive any Expedient which might evade the Obloquy ſuch a Diſcovery muſt bring on. 'Tis poſſible he might, at laſt, have muſter'd Courage enough to aſk what 'twas they meant; but the Chevalier *St. Aumar*, who, by the Reaſons already mention'd, had all this while been prevented from making any outward Shew of his inward Diſorders, having now got the better of his Surpriſe and Confuſion of Thought, Rage took the whole Poſſeſſion of his Soul. The Sight of *Du Lache*, and the Reflection how much he had ſuffer'd himſelf to be deceiv'd by the Artifices of that Villain, put him beyond all Patience: He drew his Sword, and running furiouſly at him, as he was about to ſpeak, had certainly ſilenc'd him for ever, if *Beauclair*, who happen'd to be next him, had not been quick enough to lay hold of his Arm. Hinder not, Monſieur, *(ſaid he)* the Hand of Juſtice: That Wretch is unworthy of Life; and ſince our Laws are but too deficient in puniſhing Crimes ſuch as his, thoſe who, like me, he has wrong'd, have a Title to revenge themſelves. It was with all the Difficulty in the World that *Beauclair*, the *Marquis*, and all the Company perſuaded him to ſheathe the Sword; and, perhaps, all they could ſay, to repreſent how much ſo deſpicable a Creature, both by his Birth and Principles, was below the Reſentment of a Man of Honour, had been ineffectual, if Count *de la Torre* had not catch'd hold of the cowardly Wretch, who all this Time ſtood hanging down his Head and trembling, and bringing him to the *inrag'd Chevalier*, whoſe Arm he found *Beauclair* had ſtill Poſſeſſion of; See here, Monſieur *(ſaid he)* when once *Reflection* gets the Maſtery of Paſſion, how wou'd you bluſh to think you muſt be queſtion'd in the *King*'s Name, why you depriv'd him of ſo worthleſs a *Subject!* 'Tis thus, and thus *(purſu'd he, giving him*

him two or three Kicks,) we ſhou'd chaſtiſe the Inſolence of ſuch Wretches. In ſpeaking theſe laſt Words he turn'd him, who was glad of an Opportunity to make uſe of his Heels, out of the Room. No body ſtaid long after: All had been ſaid and done that cou'd convince the *Baroneſs* her Reign was at an End; and now the Company ſeparated, every one to think or talk of this Adventure as their ſeveral Sentiments of it prompted them, To the Ladies it was Matter enough of Diverſion: Nothing can be more pleaſing to thoſe Women who ſet up for being admir'd, of which Sort were moſt of this Aſſembly, than to ſee the Downfall of a reigning *Toaſt:* The prodigious Power the *Baroneſs* had, till now, maintain'd over ſo many Hearts, had long been the Envy of each pretending Fair; and to behold it ſunk in a Moment, —— her Charms depriv'd of all their wonted Force, — her Arts, her Blandiſhments no more effectual; — Contempt in the Place of Eſteem, and Deteſtation in the Room of Love, gave a Joy too exquiſite to be deſcrib'd by any thing but itſelf: Their Looks, the chearful Accent of their Voices, whenever any Occaſion offer'd to ſpeak of this Affair, cou'd only demonſtrate the ſecret Satisfaction glowing in their enliven'd Souls!

Of all the Men intereſted in this Diſcovery, only *Le Sourbe* was inconſolable: The Weakneſs of his Intellects, together with the Meanneſs of his Spirit, made him the moſt unfortunate Creature on Earth: He had fancied himſelf ſuperlatively bleſt, diſtinguiſh'd from all the reſt of Mankind, belov'd, admir'd, ador'd, careſs'd by the moſt Lovely, moſt Ingenuous, moſt Faithful of her Sex; and now, at once, to find his Happineſs imaginary, the Woman he had idoliz'd, he had worſhipped as a *Goddeſs*, but mere *Mortal*, with all her Sex's Failings, truly eminent in nothing but Hypocriſy; the Favours he had receiv'd, only the Overflowings of a *luxurious* Appetite, or condeſcended to gratify a *mercenary* one, made him almoſt diſtracted. He ſeem'd either never

to

to have known, or to have forgot his own Imperfections, which if he had duly weigh'd, he could never have been deceiv'd into an Opinion, that a Woman neither old nor unlovely cou'd have been blind to 'em, and conſequently eſcap'd a Diſappointment ſo grievous. Not a Perſon of his Acquaintance but he told the Story to; making moſt pitiful Lamentations; ſaying how dearly he had loved the *Baroneſs*; how much he had ſtudied to oblige her; what Preſents he had made her; the Pleaſure with which ſhe had ſeem'd to accept of his Services; deſcrib'd the a-thouſand-times-repeated Endearments which had paſs'd between them; and then *(burſting into a Flood of Tears)* Yet ſhe is falſe! wou'd he cry, ſhe is falſe! *forſworn to all the Gods and me!* The poor Wretch, to his other Fopperies, had alſo a paſſionate Affection for Rhiming, a Vanity almoſt as unbecoming to one of his *Age*, as *Love:* And now having two ſuch Themes as *Deſpair*, and the *Perfidy of a Miſtreſs*, *Melpomene* was every Day invok'd; the whole Town was perſecuted with his Complaints in *Metre*; and 'tis hard to ſay, which ſuffer'd moſt in his publiſhing them, the *Baroneſs*'s Reputation of *Honour*, or his own of *Underſtanding*.

NOT in this Manner behav'd the Marquis *de Sonville*, the Count *de la Torre*, the Chevalier *St. Aumar*, and Monſieur *Beauclair:* The *three former* immediately enter'd into new Attachments, in the Pleaſures of which the Memory of the old one was eaſily forgot; and the Condition of the *latter* was ſuch as wou'd neither permit him to complain, to rail, or to condemn. He was not, perhaps, in ſo great a Surpriſe at the late Diſcovery of the *Baroneſs*'s Humour as ſome others appear'd to be, but the Treatment which he was Witneſs *Du Lache* had receiv'd; and the Character he heard of him, was what involv'd him in the greateſt Perplexity: He now began to imagine that there was more than a Probability, that all he had been told of *Montamour* was falſe; and the Horror he conceiv'd at having ſuffer'd himſelf to be impos'd on to the Prejudice of that Lady's Reputation,

tion, and his own Inclinations, was ſuch as Language is too weak to repreſent. Once he believ'd nothing could be a greater Misfortune than the Aſſurance ſhe was unworthy his Affection; now he dreaded that he ſhould one Day be convinc'd ſhe was but too meritorious. If ſhe be innocent, *(ſaid he to himſelf)* what a Villain, what a Monſter, muſt I have all this while appear'd?—— Ignorant of the Arts by which I have been deluded, ſhe muſt deſpiſe and hate me.— What ſhall I do to acquire a Knowledge of the Truth?—— How find out the fatal Certainty of her Virtue? A Certainty which muſt for ever damn me to Deſpair, ſince, Devil-like, I have renounc'd my Heaven; yet frightful as the Precipice appears, I muſt plunge in— muſt fathom the wild Abyſs!—muſt drag up *Confirmation*, tho' ſhe comes waited on by all the Terrors of *Remorſe*, Self-Condemnation, and the ever-during Sting of Conſcience.—Hell, Hell itſelf, affords no Torture like *Suſpenſe*, cruel, diſtracting, Senſe-deſtroying *Suſpenſe!*— Give, give me, Fate, ſome Means to eaſe the preſent Anguiſh, and order all hereafter as thou pleaſeſt. In this Manner, whenever he was alone, did he torment himſelf; and when in Company, no more appeared the Man he was: A ſudden Cloud hung ever on his Brow; his once enlivening Converſation was now exchan'd for Peeviſhneſs; his Gallantry for cold Neglect; his gay Addreſs for ſilent Churliſhneſs; perpetual Ill-nature and an inceſſant Gloom diffus'd itſelf thro' all his Air, and darken'd every Grace. Whenever he heard the Name of *Tortillée*, (as the prodigious Eclat the Adventures of the Letter to *La Branche* had made in Town, gave him frequent Occaſions) it fill'd him with mortal Diſquiets; if that of *Montamour*, he was unable to contain himſelf. In this Confuſion of Thought he ſought *Du Lache*, reſolving to force from him a Clue to guide him through a Labyrinth, which, at preſent, ſeemed ſo intricate: But that Villain was no where to be found, and to hope for any from the *Baroneſs*, was ridiculous; beſides, the Sight of her was now grown inſupportable; and 'tis poſſible he would rather have remain'd for ever as he was,

was, than have been oblig'd to her for an Eclairciſſement, had there been any Probability ſhe would have been prevail'd on to make one. In theſe Perturbations let us leave him for a while, and ſee what became of thoſe who had occaſion'd them.

Du Lache, after receiving that contemptuous Uſage from the *Marquis*, quitted not the *Baroneſs*'s Houſe; but being retir'd into an inner Room, a little to recollect and conſider what it ſhou'd be that occaſion'd it, was ſeen by *Harriot*, and immediately directed to her Lady, whom he found in a Diſorder ſcarce poſſible to conceive; yet wild and incoherent as her tempeſtuous Paſſion was, he ſoon diſcover'd what had happen'd, and join'd with her in exclaiming on the Vanity and Neglect of *La Branche*, who had ſo little Regard of a Lady's Reputation, as to ſuffer her Letters to be expos'd. He had alſo another Account to give of this unworthy Lover, which if any thing could have heighten'd the Fury ſhe was already in, the Knowledge of would have done. Not all thoſe Artifices which had triumph'd over the Judgment of ſo many Men of Senſe, had been able to work the deſir'd Effect on *La Branche:* Stupid as he was in every thing elſe, in this he had the Advantage of thoſe of the beſt Underſtanding; and, in ſpite of all that *Du Lache* and his politick Inſtructreſs could do, the young Woman, whoſe Engagements with him had, perhaps, been the greateſt Motive which entitled him to be lov'd by the *Baroneſs*, was now going to take him from her for ever: They were to be married in a few Days; and this vile Woman had the juſt Mortification to be told, That to make Reparation for his former Tranſgreſſion, he had bound himſelf in an Obligation never to ſee her more. To repreſent in what Manner ſhe receiv'd this News, one had need be acquainted with the Inhabitants of *Bedlam:* Her Words, her Looks, her Air were all Diſtraction: ——— She ſaw ſhe was utterly undone with the Marquis *de Sonville*, the Count *de la Torre*, the Chevalier *St. Aumar*, *Beauclair*, and

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Le Sourbe; and to be abandon'd by the Man, for whoſe Sake ſhe had loſt the Eſteem and good Opinion of them all, was ſuch a killing Stroke, as nothing could enable her to ſupport. Wanting the Means of Vengeance on thoſe who had occaſion'd it, her unavailing Rage recoil'd upon itſelf: She tore her Hair and Face, and bit her very Fleſh in the Extremity of her Paſſion: It was not now in the Power of her Emiſſary, *Du Laçhe*, to ſay or do any thing that could give her Conſolation: The Caſe was now too deſperate to admit Relief from any of thoſe Stratagems he had formerly ſo well ſucceeded in: His Artifices were diſcover'd, and therefore no more effectual: He was now a known Deceiver, a Villain proclaim'd, as his Patroneſs was a Jilt: And all that either of them could do, was to vent ſome Part of their enervate Malice in Curſes. After having rail'd themſelves almoſt out of Breath againſt *La Branche*, the *Marquis*, and all who had ſeem'd to approve of his Proceeding, they began, as 'tis the Cuſtom of all baſe People, when their Deſigns miſcarry, to reflect one on another: You might have prevented all this, Madam *(ſaid he)* but your ungovern'd Paſſion for *La Branche* would ſuffer you to liſten to no Reaſons. — Villain *(cry'd ſhe)* to what End have I heaped unnumber'd Obligations on thee, but to engage thy ſubtle-working Brain to procure my Pleaſures, and protect my Fame? But ſtupid or ungrateful, thou haſt ruin'd both:——My Reputation's loſt, my Love undone: The Earth contains not ſo forlorn a Wretch; yet thou canſt calmly tell me, *This might have been prevented:*——Yes, it might, had thy Management been equal to thy Boaſting. Madam, what could I do? *(reſum'd he)* I never approv'd of your ent'ring into an Engagement with *La Branche*; I knew he was unfit, and therefore adviſ'd you.——Thou Fool, *(interrupted the impatient* Baroneſs) what Lover ever took Advice? His Humour, or his Principle, being unſuited to my Purpoſe, made not his Form leſs pleaſing

ſing to my Eyes : ——— 'Twas thy Buſineſs to have wound thyſelf into his Soul, chang'd every Movement there, created it all a-new, and faſhion'd it to my Deſign. Thus did each endeavour to lay the Blame of this Misfortune on the other; and the Diſpute growing higher, at laſt it came to a down-right Quarrel, and they parted almoſt as ill-ſatisfy'd with one another, as both were with the World.

Some Days paſt before they met again : The *Baroneſs* ſhut herſelf into her Chamber, and would ſee no Company; and *Du Lache* was beginning to think what Courſe of Life he muſt now take up, believing there was no more Profit to be expected from that he had lately profeſs'd. But he was too ſkilful an Engineer to be diſcarded ſo; when he had given over all Hope of ever being employ'd by her again, a Meſſenger came from the *Baroneſs* to let him know ſhe deſir'd to ſpeak with him immediately. The Summons was too welcome not to be readily obey'd: He went, but found not the Buſineſs, what he imagin'd, to endeavour to reinſtate her in the Affections of any of her *former* Lovers, or to contrive ſome plauſible Pretence for the introducing her to a *new* one, but to aſſiſt her once more to get rid of her Huſband, who was coming to call her to a dreadful Account for her Behaviour. She had juſt receiv'd News, that the *Baron*'s Diſtemper having reach'd the Ear of a ſkilful Phyſician, who happen'd to be at that time in the Country, where ſhe had diſpos'd him, he attempted to cure it; which he had accompliſh'd to the Wonder of every body who had been Witneſs of his Phrenzy; that this much-wrong'd Gentleman was preparing for *Paris*; and that the Perſon who had reſtor'd him to Reaſon, had alſo made him know, it was but by ſome ſupernatural Means that he ſo long had languiſhed in the Want of it. This was a terrible Shock! a Blow, indeed, which all the Artifice of this guilty Pair was at a Loſs for Means to parry. They ſpent ſome Time in bewailing their common Misfortune: She upbraided

braided *Du Lache*, for his ill-tim'd Mercy, as ſhe call'd it: I would have put an end to my Fears (ſaid ſhe) by taking away the Life of this Troubler of my Repoſe: Had your Advice not interpos'd, I had not now been ſo curs'd in the Apprehenſion that I muſt be oblig'd to anſwer for my paſt Conduct, and regulate the future: ——But for you, continu'd ſhe, I might have been bleſt as my utmoſt Wiſh could make me, Miſtreſs of my ſelf, entire Poſſeſſor of the whole Fortune of this fooliſh *Baron*, and independent of the World's Opinion: Now I muſt flatter, ſooth, cajole, and all, perhaps, in vain, for a precarious Subſiſtence.—Wretched, wretched Fool (cry'd ſhe out, ſtamping and biting her Nails) to be thus perſuaded contrary to my Intereſt, to my Inclinations, to my eternal Peace!——Hold, Madam, hold (interrupted he) have Patience, 'tis not yet too late to prevent the Ills you dread; the Inſtruments of Death are ſtill at hand; and when, like Fate, you give the Word, ſhall ruſh to Execution. The horrid Deed being thus reſolv'd on, all they had to do was to contrive the Means to bring it about. After ſeveral Inventions form'd and rejected, becauſe they were either unſafe, or unſure, it was at laſt pitch'd on that ſhe ſhould write a moſt tender and paſſionate Letter, congratulating his Return of Health, and preſſing his coming home; that it ſhould be convey'd to him, by *Le Songe* and *Toncarr*, who were to paſs as Servants ſhe had lately taken into the Family, and recommended to attend him to *Paris*. This way (ſaid he) will certainly be the moſt effectual; for it will prevent him from hiring any Servants, who perhaps might be reſolute enough to defend their Maſter, if our Friends ſhould attack him on the Road; but being receiv'd by him in this manner, he will be entirely in their Power, and they may have an eaſy Opportunity of diſpatching him in the Journey, whenever they find a Place convenient. The *Baroneſs* approv'd of it extremely; and

thinking every Moment an Age till her wicked Deſigns were brought about, immediately ſet down to write, while *Du Lache* went to prepare his aſſiſting Villains for the Enterprize they were to undertake.

ENOUGH has been ſaid of the Character of theſe two Wretches to make the Reader know they were capable of any Miſchief which had a Proſpect of Advantage: They readily agreed; and being equipp'd in Habits proper for their Deſign, took Horſe the ſame Night, promiſing they would bring back a ſatisfactory Account of what they had done. An Accident happen'd immediately after, which convinc'd the *Baroneſs* how neceſſary what ſhe had contriv'd was to the Conſervation of her Fortune: *Du Lache* was under an Arreſt on the Account of ſome Riot he had lately been guilty of; to redeem him from which, there muſt be a good Sum of Money depoſited. She ſent to the Banker, in whoſe Hands lay the beſt Part of the *Baron*'s ready Caſh; but he refus'd to pay her any, ſaying, he had a Letter of Advice to the contrary; and that he would diſburſe no more till he either ſaw her Lord, or had Orders from him to do it. This was enough to let her know the Power ſhe once had over him was at an End; and that if he liv'd to return, ſhe muſt expect another Sort of Treatment than ſhe had been accuſtom'd, or could endure to receive. Money, however, muſt be rais'd; her Inſtrument muſt not remain in Confinement: But having now no Credit, even with a Lover, ſhe procur'd ſome on her Jewels, and releas'd him without giving herſelf much Trouble about the Matter, believing ſhe ſhould ſoon be in a Condition to redeem them, having a Will by her, which the *Baron*, in the time of his too-abundant Fondneſs, had made, wherein ſhe was left ſole Executrix, and full Miſtreſs of every thing he had in the World. This ſhe deſign'd to produce as ſoon as the wiſh'd-for News of his Death ſhould arrive, to the Diſappointment of all his Relations, who were utterly ignorant of his having been guilty of ſo much Injuſtice.

juſtice. Some Debts alſo, which the Extravagance of this Fellow had contracted, now threatning to come upon him, and the Impoſſibility there was, at preſent, for the *Baroneſs* to diſcharge them, oblig'd him, as ſoon as he was releas'd from his Confinement, to take Shelter in her Houſe, till the happy Hour was come, in which they were to have all things in their Power.

It was in this time of his abſconding, that Monſieur *Beauclair* was in ſearch of him every where, but in the Place in which he really was; but tho' it was highly probable he might have been heard of at the Baroneſs's, yet ſo great was his Averſion to that Houſe, that he could not think of going to it on any Account whatſoever; and to ſend any other Perſon to make an Enquiry, he knew would be in vain, ſince he was told the Reaſons of his concealing himſelf. But notwithſtanding the Impoſſibility he found there was of coming to any Knowledge of the Truth through his Means, he was inform'd of enough to make him but too ſenſible for his Repoſe, that he had been betray'd into a wrong Belief: He ſometimes viſited Madamoiſelle *Sansfoy*; and that Lady, who had not the Gift of concealing any thing ſhe knew, ſoon made him acquainted that it was only from *Du Lache* ſhe had been told any thing to the Diſadvantage of *Montamour*'s Reputation; and that as to the Story of *Galliard*, ſhe was now fully convinc'd it was intirely falſe. The Pangs which at this Diſcourſe ſeiz'd the Soul of the too late repenting *Beauclair*, were ſuch as were very near driving him to Diſtraction: The Reflection how by the *worſt* of Women, and her curſed Agents, he had been led to injure the *beſt*; one who lov'd him; one for whoſe Sake, while he believ'd her true, he would have foregone all that this World calls dear, was ſo dreadful a Shock to his Honour, Good-nature, every generous Principle of Humanity, that all the Strength of Reaſon and Diſcretion he was Maſter of, could hardly enable him to ſuſtain: Could his whole Fortune, nay, his very

Life, have called back Time, and cancell'd the Actions of a few paſt Months, how gladly would he have reſign'd it? But ſuch a Wiſh was both ridiculous and vain; nor could he hope the ſincere Remorſe and Grief he felt for what he had done, could expiate his Guilt: The Perſon he had injur'd was inſenſible of his Repentance; ſhe was ignorant how much he ſuffer'd in a Self-conviction; or if, by any means, he could acquaint her with it, he could not aſſure himſelf ſhe would think it a ſufficient Inducement to engage her to forgive. Yet all the Conſolation his Sorrows wou'd admit, was to make trial of her Goodneſs: Perhaps, thought he, if I cou'd once more have the Happineſs to throw myſelf beneath her Feet, to confeſs my Fault, to implore her Pity, ſhe may yet have ſome Remains of Tenderneſs, which my Complaints may waken! Ungrateful as I ſeem, ſhe ſtill may love me, and nothing is unpardonable to *Love!* With theſe, and the like Suggeſtions, which the natural Chearfulneſs of his Temper, and the Experience he had of the Sweetneſs of her Diſpoſition inſpir'd him with, did he repel Deſpair whenever he found it attempted to aſſail him. But a true Paſſion cannot for any long time content it ſelf with an *Ideal* Bliſs; It was not ſufficient that he imagin'd a Poſſibility of being forgiven, of being bleſs'd as he had been in the Affections of his, now more than ever, adorable and belov'd *Montamour*, without an Aſſurance that he was ſo; and tho' Hope is the beſt Cordial to preſerve Deſire, thoſe who ſit down with that, and delay the Proſecution of a farther Satisfaction, are like thoſe who build Caſtles in the Air, pleaſing themſelves with an imaginary Happineſs, which whenever they gather Courage enough to endeavour to lay hold on, flies from the Embrace, and cheats the vain Attempter; *Beauclair* was for no ſuch unſubſtantial Bleſſings; the Comfort he found in entertaining an Opinion that he might one Day be happy, hinder'd him not from an Impatience to be ſo.

Love, ever fertile in Invention, and aiding to the Wiſhes of a zealous Votary, ſoon furniſh'd him with a Stratagem, which promis'd him Succeſs at leaſt ſo far as to give him once more an Opportunity of ſeeing and ſpeaking to *Montamour*. He was acquainted with a Friar of the Order of *St. Dominic*, one who was not the moſt ſtrict of his Profeſſion; one who had himſelf experienc'd the Force of Love, and knew how to commiſerate the Woes it very often was the Cauſe of. To him did the reſtleſs *Beauclair* apply for Relief: He made no Secret of the whole Hiſtory of his Paſſion, and the Deluſions he had been enſnar'd by, and entreated his Aſſiſtance in the Deſign he had form'd. He ſo far prevail'd on him, as to engage him to procure a Friar's Habit for him; and got his Inſtructions in what Manner to behave, that he might paſs for ſuch to the Abbeſs of the Monaſtery where *Montamour* had enter'd herſelf. Every Thing being ready, he ſoon ſet out for the Land of Love, not greatly deſpairing but that at his Arrival he ſhou'd find himſelf not an unwelcome Gueſt.

He follow'd ſo exactly the Directions which had been given him by the good-natur'd Friar, that whoever had ſeen him in that Garb, wou'd have ſuſpected him for no other than what he ſeem'd.

Being come to the Monaſtery, the Sanctity of his Appearance gave him an eaſy Admittance; and telling the Abbeſs that he had taken that Journey at the Entreaty of the Brother of *Montamour*, who had inform'd him, that he was under an Apprehenſion that there was more of *Pique* than true *Devotion* in her abandoning the World, and deſir'd him to diſcourſe her on that Affair: When he told me this, ſaid the Counterfeit Venerable, I thought the Duty of my Function obliged me to ſearch into the Truth, and uſe the beſt of my Endeavours to prepare her, if ſhe is not ſo already, for the Happineſs which a religious Life affords. With this, and ſome other Expreſſions of the ſame Nature, the Reverend Matron was wholly won to his Purpoſe: She left him alone, while ſhe went

to acquaint *Montamour* of his being there, and the Reaſons which had brought him. But when ſhe return'd leading her in, and had preſented her to him, how impoſſible would it be to ſet forth the Confuſion he was in? The ſudden Ruſh of painful Extacy! the darting, throbbing, tingling Mixture of Delight and Terror, which every Vein confeſs'd, and ſhook the alarm'd Heart with almoſt mortal Tremblings! Not all the natural Boldneſs of his Sex, not all that Preſence of Mind which us'd to be his inſeparable Companion, not all the Reſolutions he had form'd, not all the Care he had taken to arm himſelf for this Encounter, were ſufficient to defend him, when once the lovely injur'd *Montamour* appear'd! He thought ſhe look'd more fair; more beautiful than ever; and though her Eyes had loſt nothing of their wonted Sweetneſs, yet a long Habitude of Melancholy had abated a little of the Gaiety of their Rays, and the Auſterity of the Life ſhe was about to embrace had given her a greater Compoſedneſs in her Countenance. Conſcious of Guilt, and too—too ſenſible of his own Unworthineſs to find Mercy, ſhe ſeem'd to him ſuch as Imagination figures a deſtroying Angel, adorn'd in ſhining Ruin! all glorioufly cruel! and ſeverely juſt! It was not in the leaſt owing to his own Conduct, that his Diſorders were not viſible to the Abbeſs; but that good Lady believing that on the Account he came 'twas improper to have a third Perſon Witneſs of what he had to deliver, took her Leave, only telling him, that when their Conference was ended, ſhe ſhould entreat his Company to take Part of what their Cloiſter afforded. But he neither heard, nor had Power to make any Anſwer to this Compliment; every Senſe was abſent, and Thought diſſolv'd in the vaſt Hurry of his various Emotions; but when *Montamour*, who little ſuſpected the Reaſon of the *Friar*'s Silence and diſtant Behaviour, deſir'd him to ſit down, and was beginning to enquire after her Brother, the Sound of her dear, well-remember'd Voice, the graceful charming

Manner

Manner in which ſhe expreſs'd herſelf, and that engaging, undeſcribable, inimitable Something, which is not to be acquired, and which is only to be found in the Air and Mien of thoſe whom *Nature*, and not *Art* embelliſhes, putting him more ſtrongly in Remembrance of the felicitous Moments her Converſation formerly had bleſs'd him with, and revolving in an Inſtant ten thouſand little nameleſs Softneſſes,—— the thrilling, melting, rapturous Amuſements,—— the Conſequences of mutual Paſſion——and comparing the *preſent* with the *paſt*, what he endur'd was not to be conceal'd!—a ſudden Burſt of wild impetuous Paſſion broke through all Diſguiſe, blaz'd in his Eyes, and ſhew'd the burning Lover plain! Forgetful of what his cooler Thoughts had form'd, he threw himſelf on her Boſom, graſping her with a Violence ſcarce ſupportable, and fixing cloſe to hers his glowing Lips, had Power no other way to expreſs the Extacy he now again began to re-enjoy!——— a thouſand fond endearing things crouded at once into his Soul, and preſs'd for Utterance—He wou'd have ſpoke 'em all, but the tumultuous Meanings were too great, too many, and overthrew each other in the Throng, and all he cou'd bring forth was *Montamour!*——Angelick *Montamour!* Divine, Adorable *Montamour!*———This was indeed ſufficient to make her ſenſible who it was ſhe entertain'd; and nothing can be more amazing than that in the Surprize of ſuch an Interview, ſhe acted not the leaſt Extravagance:—Neither the Shock which the Remembrance of his late ill Uſage gave her Pride, vented itſelf in Fury and Revilings; nor the ſecret Pleaſure, which, in ſpite of her Reſentment, her continued Tenderneſs felt at his Repentance and Return, was diſcoverable by either Word or Look; but doubtful that ſhe might not retain this Command of her Temper, if ſhe truſted herſelf to liſten to the Charms of his Perſuaſion, wou'd not put it to the Venture, but getting looſe from his Embrace, and giving a ſudden Spring to a little Bell which hung in the

Room, rung it with ſuch a Force, that the *Abbeſs* and ſeveral of the *Nuns* came running in before this diſappointed Lover cou'd ſay or do any Thing to prevent her. What this holy Man (ſaid ſhe, turning to the Abbeſs) has to offer, may, perhaps, be very good; but as my Reſolution to become a *Devotée* is fix'd, I think it needleſs to hear any Thing which is deſign'd as an Endeavour to alter it: If my Brother is poſſeſs'd of any Scruples, or wou'd infuſe any into you, of my Unworthineſs of the Profeſſion, he may communicate them by Letters either to you or me; for I am fully determin'd to enter into no Converſation with any Stranger, till my having taken the Orders has put a Stop to all the Arguments which may poſſibly be prepar'd to hinder me. In ſpeaking theſe laſt Words, which ſhe pronounc'd with the moſt reſolute Air, ſhe flew out of the Room, leaving him to make his Excuſe as he cou'd to the *Abbeſs*, and thoſe of the Siſterhood who had accompany'd her. The Conſternation they were in at her Behaviour was very favourable to *Beauclair*; for while they were looking on one another, wondring what it ſhould be that had occaſion'd it, he gain'd a little Time for the Recovery of his ſcatter'd Spirits, but not enough to enable him to ſpeak of this Adventure, as a Perſon ſo unconcern'd as that which he repreſented wou'd have done. The Confuſion, however, and Heſitation of the few Words he ſpoke, were look'd on only as occaſion'd by his Chagrin for the indifferent Reception he had met with; and he left them as full of Trouble for the Diſreſpect they imagin'd had been paid to a Man of his Reverence, as they wou'd have been of Anger had they ſuſpected the Impoſture.

But when he was return'd to the Inn where he had taken up Lodgings for this Affair, how infinitely ſhort of what he felt wou'd all Deſcription be? For ſome Hours he was utterly incapable of Reflection, and its Return ſerv'd but to torture him with redoubled Agonies! all the Horrors, all the Woes that

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can be imagined to attend diſappointed Paſſion, work'd up to the moſt elevated Degree that human Nature can ſuſtain, raged in his Soul, and tore him with Variety of Anguiſh! It was the leaſt of his Vexations that he owed them only to himſelf: If *Montamour* was incens'd, it was his own ill Conduct was the Cauſe; and if ſhe never ſhou'd be brought to a Reconciliation, what but his own Unworthineſs cou'd be accuſed? In fine, he was quite Soul-ſick, and mad at the Thoughts of what he had done; and the Forgetfulneſs he had ſuffer'd himſelf to fall into, in loſing an Opportunity ſo hard to be found, of endeavouring once to move her in his Favour. But as impoſſible as at preſent it ſeem'd of getting any Means of ſeeing or ſpeaking to her again, he cou'd not think of returning to *Paris* thus unſatisfied: Her Year of Probation was now almoſt expired,——the fatal Time drew near, in which ſhe was to take an eternal Farewel of the World; and then not all his Tears, his Vows, Entreaties, or Repentance, not even her own Deſires, had Power to make him happy.——Some Contrivance therefore muſt be form'd, and ſpeedily; and he reſolv'd, let the Court be ever ſo deſperate, to hazard all for one more Interview. Invention, charg'd with the Commands of Paſſion, brought forth a numerous Iſſue of unjointed Projects,—but abortive all, diſown'd by Reaſon and unnerv'd for Action:--To think of entring the Monaſtery as a *Friar*, tho' by ever ſo different a Pretence from that he lately went on, was ridiculous and vain: He had been detected in that Habit by the Perſon from whom, till ſhe was a little ſoftened, he found it was moſt his Intereſt to be conceal'd; and ſhe being under the ſame Roof, would afford him ſlender Conſolation, if denied the Privilege of entertaining her.———Sometimes he was thinking to diſguiſe himſelf as a Cripple, pretend he had fallen from his Horſe, and being unable to travel, implore the Charity and Aſſiſtance of the Siſterhood; but the Remembrance that there was a College of

Jeſuits within a Bow-ſhot from the Monaſtery, to which they would probably ſend him, as a Place more proper and convenient, put an End to that Deſign.—Another Stratagem was to dreſs himſelf as a Woman, whom ſome unexpected ill Turn of Fortune had driven from her Parents, and beg an *Aſylum* there; but this his Stature forbid.——It was a conſiderable time before any thing which ſeem'd feaſible offer'd itſelf to his Fancy; but what is it that a Lover cannot, at laſt, get the better of, when Reſolution is on his Side? As he was walking one Day by the Walls which encompaſs'd the *Nunnery* Gardens, he perceiv'd a Piece of it had lately fallen, and was now repairing by the Workmen; he preſently bethought him of becoming a Labourer, and by that Means having free Egreſs and Regreſs to carry Mortar, Stone, and other things for the Work, he might eaſily hide himſelf among the Buſhes, and watch an Opportunity of *Montamonr*'s coming to walk. This Enterprize was no ſooner conceiv'd than put in Execution: His Friar's Veſt was now exchang'd for a ragged Coat, his Cowl for a Linſey-woolſey Cap, and his Beads for a Hod: By offering himſelf for a low Hire, he was immediately entertain'd by the Maſter. His Buſineſs being only to fetch and carry, he was not at all found fault with, but perform'd what he had undertaken with more Diligence than thoſe who had all their Life been accuſtomed to it; ſo much more eaſy is it for the truly well bred to deſcend to the meaneſt Offices, than for thoſe born to Beggary to bear Proſperity and an Affluence of Fortune ſuperior to their Hopes. Nor did his Toil in the Day make him forgetful of what he had deſign'd in the Night, but as ſoon as he ſaw they were about to leave Work, he took his Opportunity to ſlide down from the Wall, and conceal himſelf in the moſt remote Part of the Garden. The *firſt* Night of his Watching he had no other Reward than a diſtant Sight of *Montamour*, as ſhe was at Prayers among the reſt of the *Nuns*; for the Chapel had a Window into the Garden, and

was

was low enough for him to look in as he ſtood on Tiptoe. The *ſecond*, indeed, paid his Pains much better: She walk'd above an Hour cloſe by the Place where he was hid; and though he could not ſpeak to her, becauſe there were two of the *Nuns* with her, yet he had the Satisfaction to obſerve ſhe was extremely penſive, and that all her Companions could do was ineffectual to remove a Melancholy, which he had Leave to hope was influenc'd by her ſecret Thoughts of him. But the *third* gave him an Opportunity full as his Soul could wiſh: It chanc'd to be an extreme fine Evening, and the Fragrancy of the Air had drawn a great Number of the young *Devotees* out to refreſh themſelves: *Montamour* was among them; and he ſtill found ſhe was as thoughtful as before. They paſs'd ſome Hours there; ſome walking;——ſome ſitting on the graſſy Banks;——ſome ſporting with the various-colour'd Flowers which grew on the Borders, and ſeem'd to court the Gatherer's Hand;——ſome cooling their Fingers in the Fountain, and wantonly throwing the Water on their Companions; every one diverting herſelf as her innocent and undiſturb'd Fancy led her.———But *Montamour*, whoſe Mind was more perplex'd, and who, in the late Adventure with the lovely *Friar*, had found that Self-denial was the hardeſt of all Virtues, affected to walk alone: She either not obſerv'd, or had no Reliſh of the little Recreations they enjoy'd, but ſingling herſelf from the reſt, he ſaw her ſtrike down an Alley which led to a fine *Grotto* at the lower End of the Garden. The Place he had that very Night fortunately made choice of for his Concealment, was a long narrow Walk of *Camomile*, the End of which came almoſt to the *Grotto*, and was ſhelter'd all the Way with a thick Row of Palms: On this he could walk without being in the leaſt heard or ſeen by any body in the Garden; and as ſoon as he ſaw which Way ſhe went, he immediately follow'd. He was at the End of the Walk almoſt as ſoon as ſhe was in the *Grotto*; but he durſt

not enter while there was Company ſo near, fearing the Strength of her Reſolution, and the Prejudice ſhe had conceiv'd againſt him, and which he but too juſtly had deſerv'd, ſhould influence her to treat the *Labourer* in the ſame Manner as ſhe had done the *Friar*. Theſe Suggeſtions were, indeed, moſt conſonant to Reaſon, but they were preſently oppos'd by others of a very different Nature: He began to think that if ſhe left the Garden before the others, he might never have ſo good an Opportunity as now; that there was ſcarce a Probability he ſhou'd ever find her entirely alone; and that it was better to hazard her Good-nature, if ſhe wou'd ſuffer him to ſpeak to her now, than run the riſque of not ſpeaking to her at all. While he was thus debating, and irreſolute what to do, he heard the Charmer who had occaſioned this Conflict in his Soul, tune her Guittar: In Expectation of that Melody, he for a while ſuſpended his Cogitation, and heard her ſing in a ſoft, low, but ſweet and harmonious Accent theſe Words, which, 'tis probable, were of her own compoſing:

I.

No more, fond Maid, direct thy fruitleſs Aims
To Bliſs thou canſt but in Idea *know:*
A Love ſo pure as thine Heaven only claims,
Nor will be rival'd by the Toys below.

II.

Fly, fly, O fly! the Senſe-alluring Bait
Of gay Deceit, in tender Raptures dreſt!
Remorſe and Shame do on Believing wait,
And late Repentance rends th'unwary Breaſt!

III.

From Damon's *Air, his Shape, his flowing Wit,*
His thouſand, thouſand Worlds of countleſs Charms!
Fate *weak Defence from Virtue does permit,*
Unfurniſh'd by Devotion's *ſtronger Arms.*

IV.

IV.

Nor can Reſentment, or thy Sex's Pride,
For Injuries receiv'd, ſet free thy Mind;
Before Love's Fire thoſe meaner Flames ſubſide,
And ſhrink away like Vapours in the Wind.

V.

In Pity, alone, a Refuge dwells,
To ſhield thy Soul from Paſſion's pleaſing Pain,
The baſe Efforts of faithleſs Man repels,
And renders all their ſoft Enchantments vain.

WITH trembling Limbs and aching Heart the repenting *Beauclair* heard her ſing thoſe Lines, which gave him ſo much cauſe to fear all his Endeavours to bring her to a Reconciliation would be in vain. What Hope to conquer, when with Heaven we contend! Yet, tho' deſpairing, he would not thus give over, and was moving ſoftly towards the *Grotto*, reſolving, let the Conſequence be what it would, to know his Doom at once, and end the Tortures of Suſpence: But, as he was juſt at the Entrance, the late-ceas'd Harmony of her melodious Voice began a-new to charm his liſtening Ears, and oblig'd him to delay the Proſecution of his Deſign, that he might not loſe the Pleaſure of hearing her ſing; which ſhe immediately did theſe Stanza's:

I.

The Heart that once has Power to change,
And with a ſecond Paſſion burn,
Tho' to the firſt it would return,
Will ever be inclin'd to range.

II.

II.

Then charming faithleſs Swain give o'er;
Nor think by Pray'rs or Sighs to move;
A Rebel once to me, and Love,
I may forgive, but truſt no more.

III.

No more will I deluded be,
Though with ſecret Wiſhes lying,
All diſſolving, melting, dying,
To Death I'll yield, but not to thee.

Tho' the Muſick to which theſe Words were ſet gave then an Air infinitely more gay than the former, yet ſhe could not conclude them without a Mixture of Sighs; which occaſioning a Heſitation in her Speech, made a perceivable Variation in the Tune, and ſeem'd to mitigate their rigid Meaning: The Senſe, indeed, was cruel, but the Manner of Pronunciation was ſuch, as renewed in the attentive Liſt'ner ſome of thoſe Hopes with which he had formerly been enliven'd. The Gardens were, by this time, wholly free from Company, no Interruption near, every thing favour'd his Deſign, and now he thought he boldly might advance; but ſtill the Terrors occaſion'd by a Conſciouſneſs of his Unworthineſs, and ever the Companions of Guilt, made him enter the *Grotto*, but with Tremblings, and kept him for ſome Moments at an awful Diſtance. She was fallen into ſo deep a *Reſverie*, that ſhe diſcern'd not that any Perſon was near, though the Moon, which was then at the Height, glitter'd through the Trees, and ſhon directly on him. Gladly would he have indulged Contemplation, and fed Reflection with gazing on her Beauties, while thus unſeen, and uncontroul'd by the Severity of her Glances; but the Remembrance how he had been diſappointed by

by his late giving a Looſe to the Ardours of his Paſſion, made him reſolve to proceed with Art and Circumſpection: He moved with gentle-treading Steps to the Bank on which ſhe ſat, and was cloſe by her before ſhe in the leaſt perceiv'd him; but when, lifting up her Eyes, ſhe ſaw a Man, and felt his Touch (for he had ſeiz'd faſt hold of her to prevent her ſtirring) ſhe ſent forth a great Shriek, loud enough to have alarm'd the *Convent*, had they had any Notion that any belonging to it was abroad: But, to hinder her from repeating it, and unwilling to ſuffer her to continue longer in the Fright ſhe was in, he threw himſelf on his Knees, and bathing the Hand he graſp'd with a Stream of Tears, Hold, Madam, hold (ſaid he) this is not the Poſture of a Ruffian:—I come not to alarm your Breaſt with Fears, but to move Pity there:—'Tis Pity only, the adoring *Beauclair* aſks; and that is what, indeed, his Miſeries may claim. *Beauclair!* (ſaid ſhe, ſurpriz'd beyond Expreſſion, but perhaps not altogether ſo much diſpleas'd as afterwards ſhe feign'd to be). Yes, Madam (reſum'd he) the deſpairing, dying, but ſtill adoring *Beauclair* entreats you but to hear what paſt Appearances of Reaſon urg'd him to ſeem ſo careleſs of his Happineſs, and raſhly treſpaſs againſt Heaven and you;—and, if you *hear*, you will, I hope, *forgive*.—By what has already been ſaid of the Paſſion of *Montamour*, the Reader may be better able to judge the Conflict ſhe endur'd, than I am to deſcribe it; but reſolving to keep up her Reſentment, and give no Room for him to imagine there was a Poſſibility of renewing in her again thoſe ſoft Emotions he once had the Power of inſpiring her with; I am ſorry, Monſieur (anſwer'd ſhe, with an Accent which had nothing in it of Tenderneſs) that you ſhould have given yourſelf a Trouble wholly unneceſſary: Where there's no Wrong, there needs no Juſtification;——I have profited too much by your Change of Humour, to be offended at it:——Thoſe Vows which your Inconſtancy releas'd me from, will ſoon be paid to a ſublimer Object:

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What you deſpis'd, Heaven will, I hope, accept; and by your Ingratitude I arrive at the only perfect Happineſs here: How ought I then to bleſs the early Knowledge of your wavering Nature? —— to thank you for your quick-diſcover'd Baſeneſs, that I in time might fly, and ſcorn your faithleſs Sex? It was not ſo much the Words, as the Manner in which they were ſpoke, which ſeiz'd the Soul of him they were addreſs'd to with Horrors he had never known before: Not the paſt torturing Pangs of her imagin'd Falſhood, not the enſuing Terrors of Remorſe for his own Guilt, were half ſo dreadful as the *preſent* Racks. Amidſt the doubtful Gloom ſome intermingling Beams of Hope had ſtill dawn'd o'er his Wiſhes, chearing Expectance with Promiſes of a future Day: But all was Darkneſs now! —— all black Deſpair! The fix'd Coldneſs, the unmov'd Conſtancy which every Word and Look, and the Whole Air of *Montamour* denoted, now made him but too ſure ſhe was inevitably loſt! — Nor did the Remembrance of the Fault he had been guilty of, permit him even the poor Comfort of complaining of her Severity! A while he gaz'd upon her with ſuch inward tumultuous Emotions, as depriv'd him of the Power of Speech, till perceiving ſhe was about to go out of the *Grotto*, and leave him in the ſame Manner ſhe had done before, he threw himſelf on his Knees, by Force retaining her, till he had recover'd himſelf enough to endeavour to perſuade. All that the tendereſt Love, the fierceſt Wiſhes, the moſt bleeding burning Paſſion, made deſperate and raging, can inflict, was to the Life demonſtrated in all his Words and Actions: His trembling Limbs, his wild diſtracted Looks, his faultering Speech, his unconnected Expreſſions, diſplay'd the Deity in his full genuine Force; unſhadow'd, undiſguis'd with any of thoſe pageant Arts of pompous Eloquence, which oft adorn a counterfeited Flame, but are forgot and loſt amidſt the Ardours of a true Affection. Oh! would the unwary Fair, when thus addreſs'd, but give

give her Reaſon ſcope to judge, how eaſily might ſhe judge the real *Lover*, from the flattering *Courtier*; admire the *Wit*, but ſcorn the *affected Paſſion* of him who comes but to ſeduce and ruin her. But, indeed, there are ſo few of either Sex ſincerely touch'd with a noble and generous Deſire, that 'tis no Wonder they miſtake it in another: Deceit meets with Deceit, and both are unconcern'd alike.

But *Montamour* was vaſtly different, as was her *Beauclair*, from thoſe faſhionable Enamorato's: With Truth, with Tenderneſs, with Zeal ſhe lov'd; and tho' ſhe had all the Reaſon in the World for keeping up her Reſentment, and had Srength enough of Reſolution to reſtrain the Fondneſs of her Paſſion from ſhewing itſelf to one who had ſo greatly injur'd her, and whoſe Repentance ſhe thought too ſmall a Recompence; yet did her Soul pity the Agonies ſhe, by her own, was too——too ſenſible were unfeign'd; and muſt her ſelf of conſequence ſuffer far greater. Paſſions of all kinds find Eaſe in the Diſcovery; but ſmother'd Anguiſh preys on the very Vitals; the ſtifled Sighs recoil on the tormented Heart, and crack the Strings of Life: Yet perſiſting in her Coldneſs, and reſolving rather to die than recede from that Indifference ſhe had vow'd to wear for ever in her Behaviour to him, all that his Tears, Entreaties, agonizing Groans could move her to, was to ſit down, and liſten to all he had to ſay in Vindication of his late Proceedings; which was, to relate, in as brief a Manner as he could, the Deluſion of *Du Lache*, and the Artifices by which he had been brought to a Belief of her Inconſtancy. He kept back nothing of the Truth, but that which Honour forbad him to reveal, the Favours he had receiv'd from the Baroneſs. But *Montamour*, who was no Stranger to that Part of the Story, having patiently heard the reſt, and perceiving he had done, would not omit this Opportunity of letting him know, not the moſt ſecret Tranſactions of his Guilt had been hid from her. You do well, Monſieur (ſaid ſhe) to make a Repetition

tion of every thing which may ſeem to excuſe the ill Treatment you have given me, artfully concealing, while you relate the Accuſations laid on me, the Charms of my Rival, without which all the Suggeſtions of a Villain, like *Du Lache*, had been ineffectual. O too ſeverely judg'd! (interrupted the Soul-tortur'd *Beauclair*): Be Witneſs for me, Heaven, and ſend down inſtant Puniſhments on my devoted Head, if I ſwerve in the leaſt Tittle from the Truth!—if e'er my Soul conceiv'd one tender Thought, once form'd a Wiſh, or knew one ſoft Deſire, which center'd not in *Montamour!*—if ſtill ſhe was not, even at the time when moſt I fear'd ſhe ſcorn'd me, the only deareſt Object of my Thoughts by Day, and Dreams by Nights!—if even her Anger, killing as it is, wears not more Charms to me, than all the endearing Smiles of her whole Sex beſides!—if in this dreadful Moment, this cruel Now, when all my Tears, my Prayers, my Sorrow, and Repentance, my inward Agonies, the ſpeechleſs Torments of my poor rending, bleeding, breaking Heart, cannot obtain one pitying Glance, one kind commiſerating Word, ſhe be not dearer to me than Life, and all the gay Delights this World can give!—and if it be not greater Pleaſure here to expire before her, than live whole Ages in a Queen's Embraces, may all the Curſes due to Perfidy fall heavy on me! He would have proceeded, but ſhe prevented him: Hold (ſaid ſhe) forbear theſe Imprecations: I believe you once did love me, nay, I am of Opinion you have reſum'd that Tenderneſs you had for a time thrown off; but (continu'd ſhe, with a Smile, which had in it more of Diſdain than Satisfaction) while you imagin'd me falſe, it was but reaſonable you ſhould ſeek ſome Conſolation; and where ſo probable to find it as in the Arms of a Woman ſo every way qualified, and ſo deſirous to pleaſe, as the Baroneſs *de Tortillée?* The diſorder'd Lover hung down his Head, utterly unable to make any Reply to theſe cutting Words: He was too open and ſincere in his Nature, to be guilty of denying that

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it was really his Deſire of forgetting *Montamour*, which had induc'd him to viſit the Baroneſs; and to confeſs it, he thought, would be an Aggravation of his Crime. At laſt, O Madam! (reſum'd he) the Opinion I was enſnar'd into of your Unkindneſs drove me mad, I knew not what I did:——But of this one thing I am ſure, and of that alone, that I have never ceas'd to love you;—and whatever Appearances may be againſt me, my Heart could never be but yours! Notwithſtanding all that prodigious Preſence of Mind which *Montamour* was Miſtreſs of, and the Reſentment with which ſhe had arm'd herſelf, as ſoon as ſhe ſaw *Beauclair* was near her, ſhe began to find it now impoſſible much longer to preſerve it in his Preſence; and looking on the ſecret Pleaſure which, in ſpite of her Indignation, ſhe felt in entertaining him, as a Sin to Prudence, and the Reſolution ſhe had made of forgetting him, muſter'd up all the Remains of Anger, in her Heart, to inſpire her with all Means of baniſhing him for ever; and taking the Advantage of his laſt Words, One would, indeed (ſaid ſhe, with a Voice full of Auſterity) believe that you know not what you did, or ſure he who has ſo publickly avow'd himſelf the Lover of the Baroneſs *de Tortillée*, would never after that imagine his Pretenſions were capable of creating in *Montamour* any other Paſſion than Diſdain and Hatred:——I ſhould have an Averſion to myſelf (added ſhe, after a little Pauſe) if I could think any Action of mine has ever given you Leave to judge ſo meanly of me, as to make you hope there could be an Attonement for Injuries like thoſe you've offer'd me:—No, *Beauclair*, no! I am not twice to be deceiv'd!——Nor, had I the moſt undeniable Aſſurances that you lov'd even more than you would perſuade me that you do; nay, were I weak enough to feel for your Return of Paſſion, the ſame ſoft Emotions which heav'd my credulous Heart when firſt I liſten'd to your Vows, not to preſerve *your* Life,—my *own*,—or the eternal Peace of both, would I forgive, or e'er conſent

to

to ſee you more. As ſoon as ſhe had done ſpeaking, ſhe turn'd away, reſolving to give him no farther Opportunity of Converſation; and it was but for a very few Moments that he had Power, either by Perſuaſion or Force, to detain her; for perceiving his Deſpair made him have recourſe to the latter, ſhe ſtarted from his Arms with an uncounterfeited Fury, vowing, that if he preſum'd to hold, or follow her, ſhe would alarm the Convent with her Cries, and expoſe him to all the Puniſhments of the Eccleſiaſtick Juſtice. This laſt Threat would have avail'd but little, if the Fierceneſs of the fair Menacer had not diſarm'd him of all that Boldneſs, which is in ſome Caſes a neceſſary Qualification to make a Lover Maſter of his Wiſhes. He had not Courage to offend her more:——All that Vivacity of Thought,—that Energy of Soul, which deſpiſes Oppoſition, and triumphs over the moſt ſtrict Reſervedneſs of the denying Charmer, was now utterly extinguiſh'd in him:—He ſuffer'd her to depart;—he ſaw her go;—and while his ſtraining Eyes purſu'd her till the excluſive Walls depriv'd him of that Bleſſing, his enervate Limbs refus'd to bear him after her;—Senſeleſs and motionleſs he ſtood!—chill Horror invaded every Faculty, and even Deſire was froze! had he regarded her with leſs Purity and Reſpect, he had perhaps ſucceeded better; but *Love* has ever this Incongruity in its Effects, that the more violent it is, the leſs it is capable of ſerving it ſelf.

It muſt be a Pen infinitely more capable of Deſcription than mine, which could repreſent the true State of his Condition: When left alone, all that Deſpair, and Rage, and Grief, heighten'd by a conſciouſneſs of Guilt, and juſtly meriting every thing he ſuffer'd, cou'd inflict, was his. He thought it now altogether vain, ever to attempt her more; he gave himſelf up wholly to Diſtraction, and Life or Death were become Things indifferent to him.—The Morning found him in this wretched Circumſtance:—— The Sun, whoſe chearing Beams drive all the Miſts and

and Vapours far away, diſpell'd not his; odious and hateful to himſelf, he curs'd the Day, and wiſh'd eternal Darkneſs. ——— In this wild Hurry of confus'd Emotions, he neither conſider'd where he was, nor the Danger of being diſcover'd to have been there all Night: He attempted not to eſcape, nor ſo much as once thought of it; and inſtead of concealing himſelf among the Buſhes, till the Workmen coming might give him an Opportunity of mingling with them, as twice before he had done, he now lay flat on his Face in an open Alley of the Garden, where he was not only viſible to his Fellow-Labourers, but alſo would have been ſo to the whole Convent, if by chance any of them had look'd through the Windows. It muſt certainly have been pleaſant enough to have ſeen (though the Repetition would afford but little matter of Diverſion) the Aſtoniſhment and various Conjectures theſe Fellows put on their finding him in that Place and Poſture: Some would have it that he was a Thief, and had lain there with an Intent to rob the Monaſtery; others that having been guilty of ſome notorious Crime, he had been order'd to run ſo great a Danger by way of Penance; but the moſt good-natur'd among them, obſerving the Diſorder of his Looks and Words (for he was little prepar'd for Excuſes) imagin'd he had been ſeiz'd with a ſudden Fit of the Falling-Sickneſs, or Apoplexy. The Maſter himſelf was of this Opinion; and happening to be of a Diſpoſition leſs inclining to create Diſturbances than the Generality of his Station, who are for the moſt part greatly delighted with Noiſe and Confuſion of what kind ſoever, contented himſelf with diſcharging him from his Service, without giving any notice of what had happen'd to the *Abbeſs*, or any of the *Nuns*. One thing in this Paſſage I cannot let ſlip without obſerving; which is, That among the many different Conjectures which had been form'd on the Diſcovery that a Man had dared to conceal himſelf all Night in that forbidden Ground, there was not one who imputed it to the

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true Cauſe; which proves how little People of ſuch low Capacities are able to entertain any juſt Notions of that tender Paſſion; and how impoſſible it is for any but a Lover to conceive the Force of Love, and to what Lengths it will tranſport the Votary inſpir'd with an unfeign'd Ardour. But ſetting aſide Reflections, which the ſenſible Reader need not to be put in mind of, though our unfortunate Lover came off much better from this Adventure than he could have expected, had he conſider'd it all, yet the loſing his Employ, was the utter Loſs of all Opportunity ever to try his Fortune there again, if it had been poſſible for him to have recover'd Courage ſufficient to attempt it. He was now oblig'd to leave her to the Performance of her Vow; but with what a Tempeſt of Mind, and how accompany'd, he return'd to *Paris*, thoſe only who have ever been acquainted with the Furies of Deſpair, Remorſe, and a too-late Repentnce, can imagine.

While Affairs were in this melancholy Poſition between the Lovers, thoſe who had been the Occaſion of their Misfortunes were in a Condition much worſe, though infinitely leſs deſerving Compaſſion. The Hour was now come, in which the wicked Baroneſs, and her Inſtruments of Miſchief, were to prove, that Crimes, like theirs, however triumphant for a while, will not always eſcape the Cognizance of avenging Heaven. One Evening as ſhe was ſitting in her Cloſet, accompanied only by *Du Lache*, who, for the Reaſons before mentioned, was ſtill in her Houſe, they heard a loud Knocking at the Gate, and immediately after, the Noiſe of ſeveral Perſons coming haſtily up Stairs: The impatient Expectation they were both in for the Return of *Toncarr* and *Le Songe*, made them perfectly believe it was they; whoſe Haſte to report the joyful Tidings they had brought, had made them ſtand on ſo little Ceremony: But what was their Aſtoniſhment and Horror, when *Harriot*, who knew pretty well her Lady's Diſpoſition, tho', perhaps, not let into the Depth of her Deſigns,

ſigns, came running into the Room breathleſs and frighted out of her Wits, crying, O Madam, my Lord!——She had time for no more: The *Baron*, follow'd by ſeveral Gentlemen, was cloſe behind her, imagining by her Hurry his Wife might be there, and, probably, not without a Thought he ſhould find ſome with her whom his Preſence would alarm. But he was deceiv'd in this laſt Conjecture; for *Du Lache*, on the firſt Appearance of *Harriot*, the Terror he ſaw in her Countenance, and the Words ſhe ſpoke, was apprehenſive of the Truth, concluded himſelf betray'd, though he had no Leiſure to reflect by what Means; and agitated at once with Guilt and Shame, and Fear, the Villain's Curſe, he flew backward to the Protection of a Screen which happen'd to be there, behind which there was a Door that open'd to a little Gallery, whence, in the preſent Confuſion, he eaſily eſcap'd without being ſeen, at leaſt by any who would offer to detain him. But not the prodigious Surprize the Baroneſs muſt be in at ſeeing before her the Perſon ſhe believ'd had been deſtroy'd; not all the Terrors which ſeiz'd her guilty Soul at the Sight of him ſhe had ſo highly injur'd, and in whoſe Eyes ſhe read her Doom, had Power to deprive her of that Artifice which had ſo often ſecured her from Diſcovery, and might even now have ſtood her Friend, had the Proofs againſt her been ſuch as would have admitted of the ſmalleſt Scruple: With Tears of Joy ſhe ſeem'd to welcome her long abſent Huſband;—ſhe flew into his Arms, hung on his Neck, and fainted on his Breaſt with an admirably well-acted Tranſport of extravagant Affection:———With ſuch ſtrenuous Embraces did ſhe preſs him, that it was as much as he could do to diſengage himſelf; but when he had, Spare yourſelf, Madam (ſaid he, turning his Head from her) ſpare *yourſelf* the Pains, and *me* the Shock of remembring there can be ſuch monſtrous Diſſimulation in the World!—You ſee I have eſcap'd the Daggers you employ'd againſt me; and you might, methinks,

methinks, imagine I now know too much to be ſubjected to your Arts as heretofore. What means my Lord? interrupted ſhe: I employ Daggers! O Heaven! what *Fiend* haſt thou permitted to accuſe me, and turn the once fond Heart of my dear Lord to ſuch unheard, unthought of Cruelty?—'Tis all,--'tis all in vain, reſum'd the diſordered *Baron*, and 'twould become you better of the two to avow your Hate, and ſay I was unworthy of your Bed, than poorly thus to counterfeit a Tenderneſs, and deny a Guilt which all theſe here (continued he, pointing to the Gentlemen who were with him) know as well as I.———But to leave you no Shadow of an Excuſe, I will inform you that it is by your own Emiſſaries you are betray'd;——and when I repeat the Names of *Toncarr* and *Le Songe*, thoſe deſign'd Murderers,--thoſe pretended Servants, ſent by yourſelf, and recommended by you, Shame, ſure, will ſtop your Mouth! The Amazement ſhe put on at theſe Words, and the Aſſeverations ſhe made uſe of, that ſhe was entirely ignorant of what he meant, and that ſhe knew thoſe Men he mentioned for no other than what ſhe ſent them for, honeſt and diligent Attendants, was to no Purpoſe to make her appear leſs vile; and the Diſturbance of Soul which the *Baron* was in, damping the Power of expreſſing himſelf in as clear Terms as he would have done, one of his Friends took upon him to addreſs the Lady in this manner: Madam, ſaid, he, I fear all that you can ſay, or do, will be ineffectual to wipe off the Odium of an Accuſation, which ſo many Circumſtances concur to make appear but too juſt:—The unhappy *Delirium*, which this much-wrong'd Gentleman long labour'd under, is evident, from the Manner in which he was ſeiz'd; the Teſtimony of the Phyſician who reſtored him, and ſeveral others of the Learned that have been conſulted in it, that it proceeded from ſomething that had been given him, and not from any natural Diſorder;———then your Behaviour, while he languiſh'd under that Misfortune has been, I'm ſorry to ſay it, ſo contrary to what

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that of a Wife ſhould be, that it gives foul Suſpicions 'twas by your Means he ſwallow'd the Occaſion of his Diſtemper:—But for this laſt, this yet more monſtrous Contrivance, to murder him, both *Toncarr* and *Le Songe* have confeſs'd it was from the *Baroneſs* they were to receive that vaſt Reward *Du Lache* had promis'd them. 'Tis impoſſible to repreſent the Rage ſhe flew into at theſe Words, or the Imprecations ſhe made that every Article of this Accuſation was falſe; but the *Baron* now, too well convinc'd, growing impatient at her Obſtinacy, wou'd not ſuffer her to ſpeak much; and the Gentleman who had began to diſcourſe her on this Occaſion, reſum'd it in theſe, or the like Words: Where Proofs are plain (ſaid he) Denial but adds to the Crime, and juſtly aggravates the Perſon injur'd. Your Caſe would be infinitely more worthy Commiſeration, if touch'd with a due Senſe of the Wrongs you have done the beſt of Huſbands, you freely did acknowledge it, and in that Acknowledgment make known for whoſe Sake, and by whoſe Artifices, you had been enſnared to forget all the Ties of Virtue, Honour and Gratitude, that we might take Revenge on the Deceiver, ſuch as his generous Heart, which burns with unextinguiſhable Love, can ne'er inflict on you. The *Baroneſs* was not more diſtracted at what ſhe had ſeen and heard, than perplex'd by what Means it came about that her Deſigns were diſcover'd; ſhe could not think that either *Toncarr* or *Le Songe*, ſtaunch and experienc'd Villains, ſhould, all of a ſudden, feel Remorſe, much leſs believe that they ſhould, from any imagin'd Intereſt to themſelves, betray her; ſince, from obliging *her*, a thouſand Advantages were likely to accrue, which Men of their Principles could never hope for from the *Baron*'s Virtue; and being deſirous to know the Certainty,—Oh! 'tis I alone am wrong'd (ſaid ſhe): Thoſe Wretches have been ſet on by ſome ſecret Enemy of the *Baron*'s, whom, to ſcreen from Juſtice, they throw the black Aſperſion of his Crimes on me!—Unhappy,

guiltleſs me! No, Madam, anſwer'd he, they were but too faithful to the Truſt repos'd in them:——— Your noble Huſband eſcap'd the horrid Aſſaſſination by an Accident almoſt miraculous, in which, thank Heaven, 'twas my good Fortune to be inſtrumental. Chancing to ride that way, I ſaw thoſe Wretches, with deteſted Hands, about to plunge their cruel Swords in his defenceleſs Breaſt; I ruſh'd between, with timely Aid preſerv'd him from their Treachery, and, with the Aſſiſtancc of my Servants, bound and pinion'd them, having firſt, by Threats of inſtant Death, extorted from their Mouths an Account of what they were, and how encourag'd to this vile Attempt.—They now are in *Paris*, in Cuſtody of the Officers of Juſtice, in whoſe Preſence they have been oblig'd to make Oath of what before they had declared:—They ſtill ſtick firm to what they alledg'd at firſt; and I lament there is no room to hope my Friend is leſs unhappy than he thinks himſelf in his fair Wife's Unkindneſs. All the Courage which this unexpected Turn of Fortune had left the *Baroneſs*, forſook her at theſe Words: She could not be aſſur'd ſhe was convicted, without being as certain ſhe ſhou'd meet with the Puniſhment which her Crime deſerv'd: All her Policy forſook her; ſhe no longer had the Power of Diſſembling; nor durſt lift up her Eyes to him ſhe knew wrong'd beyond a Poſſibility of Forgiveneſs.———Streams of unfeigned Tears now trickled down her Cheeks;——real Sighs heav'd her diſorder'd Breaſt; and if ſhe felt not a true *Repentance* for her Guilt, ſhe did a ſevere *Regret* for the Condition it had reduc'd her to. The *Baron*, fully acquainted with her Unworthineſs, and ſenſible of his own too great Good-nature, dared not truſt himſelf to look upon her long, leſt his relenting Heart ſhould pardon all, and be again deluded; but turning to the Gentlemen who had accompany'd him, Come, worthy Friends, ſaid he, we trifle time with this ungrateful Woman; it yet remains to bring to Juſtice the chief Agent of her Crimes:—For her, if Conſcience, by repeated Crimes,

Crimes, be not quite loſt, and ſtifled in her Soul, 'twill find a Voice to ſpeak, and to upbraid, open the monſtrous Legend of her Actions, and with the black *Remora*'s drive her mad. He went out of the Chamber with theſe Words, which were the laſt ſhe ever heard him ſpeak; for tho', when ſhe had a little recover'd herſelf, ſhe ſent a thouſand Times to beg a Moment's Audience, he never cou'd be prevail'd upon to grant it, or to ſee her more.

After they had left her, *Du Lache* was ſought thro' every Room in the Houſe; for the *Baron* was preſently inform'd by ſome of the Servants, that he had been there conceal'd. But that Villain was, by this time, paſt their Reach; and tho' there was all imaginable Diligence made uſe of to diſcover where he was, yet many Days paſs'd over without being able to give the leaſt Account of him. By this means the Trials of *Le Songe* and *Toncarr* were delay'd, the *Baron* thinking it neceſſary to have both the Accuſers impeach'd Face to Face. ———They were kept in cloſe Priſon however, and the *Baroneſs* confined to her Chamber, without ſo much as *Harriot*, or any Servant ſhe had ever ſeen before, to attend her.

If in the *Baron*'s Soul there was the leaſt Spark of Tenderneſs remaining for his perfidious Wife, he ſoon met with what was ſufficient to extinguiſh it; when looking over the Accounts of his Eſtate, and ſeeing, under her own Hand to his Banker and Steward, the exorbitant Demands ſhe had made on them, he found, that in three Years, the Term of their being together, ſhe had conſum'd more ready Money (for he was immenſely rich) than would have ſupported the Retinue of the firſt Prince of the Blood for twice as long: Bills, alſo, for Debts ſhe had contracted, were hourly brought him for Expences of ſo ſuperfluous and luxurious a ſort, that his *Amazement* at an Extravagance ſo unbounded, ſo unexampled, was almoſt equal to his *Chagrin* at being oblig'd to diſcharge them. Beſides, as it is the way of the World

to expoſe in their worſt Colours the Vices of a Perſon in Diſgrace, his Ears were continually teiz'd with ſome new Account of her ill Conduct; and though it were ſcarce poſſible to report her more vile than ſhe really was, 'tis certain there was nothing of the Truth omitted.

THE dejected *Beauclair* was, perhaps, the only Perſon in Town whom this Adventure had not reach'd; his Soul was too much taken up in the Contemplation of his own Misfortunes, to liſten to thoſe of another. As ſoon as he return'd to *Paris*, and had got to his Lodgings, he threw himſelf into Bed, from which none of his Servants (who were entirely ignorant what it was that diſorder'd him, or where he had been) could prevail on him to riſe, or to admit the Viſits of any of his Acquaintance. A young *Chevalier* coming to lodge in the ſame Houſe, expreſs'd a prodigious Concern when he was told his Neighbour's melancholy Condition: He ſent to entreat the Liberty of viſiting him, but was refus'd: till one Day, happening to ſee a Servant going in with ſomething his Maſter wanted, he took that Opportunity (which probably he had watch'd for) to beg that Favour himſelf. It was not in the Power of any Misfortune to make *Beauclair* forget that Gentleman-like complaiſant Behaviour, which render'd his Converſation as charming to the *Women*, as the Soundneſs of his Judgment, and almoſt an univerſal Knowledge of every beneficial Study, made it eſteem'd and coveted by the *Men*, and could not avoid doing the Civility of his Chamber, when one, who appear'd ſo much a Gentleman, deſir'd to be admitted. Beſide, there was ſomething ſo engaging in the Air and Mien of this young *Chevalier*, which, whether he would or no, attracted his Admiration: He grew immediately charm'd with him without knowing that he was ſo; and began to find a Pleaſure in converſing with him, ſuch as had been a Stranger to his Soul, ſince his breaking off with *Montamour*. He fancy'd, indeed, he found ſomething

thing in his Features, and the Accent of his Voice, ſo much reſembling that Lady's, that had it ſeem'd poſſible, he ſhould have believ'd it her: But that was a vain and ſoon-rejected Thought!——She was far off,——ſhut up within a Monaſtery:—Though had ſhe been near, and at Liberty, there was little Likelihood that ſhe, who would not by all his Entreaties be won to grant him one Moment's willing Audience, when he had riſqu'd ſuch imminent Dangers to obtain it, ſhould come, of her own Accord, to ſeek him, at his own Lodgings, and in a Garb ſo much unſuitable to her Nicety and Reſerve. Beſides, the *Chevalier* had darker Hair, a far leſs delicate Complexion, and a certain Boldneſs in his Look, becoming enough in one of his Sex, but vaſtly different from that modeſt Mildneſs he had always ſeen in hers. The bare Imagination, however, that there was a Likeneſs, tho' never ſo ſmall a one, was ſufficient to make him valuable: He was ſo far from being chagrin'd at the Intruſion, that he became a Petitioner for the ſame Favour the next Day; and the other was too well ſatisfied in entertaining him, not to comply with his Requeſt: There ſoon grew an Intimacy between them, which ſeem'd rather the Conſequence of many *Years* Acquaintance, than a few *Days*. 'Tis very difficult for the Tongue to forbear ſpeaking ſomething of what the Soul is full of: The deſpairing *Beauclair*, wholly taken up with his Paſſion, could not ſit ſo many Hours with his new Friend, without revealing the whole Hiſtory of it to him:——He let him into every Particular of his Tranſgreſſion, and Repentance for it; complain'd of the uncommon Severity of *Montamour*, and entreated his Advice. Nor was he, while making this Recital, agitated with more violent Emotions than the Hearer of it appear'd to be; The young *Vrayment* (for ſo he call'd himſelf) diſcover'd he had a Heart tender and ſuſceptible of Love's ſoft Impreſſion: He could not liſten to ſome Paſſages, and reſtrain his Tears, nor ſuffer a Sigh from *Beauclair* to paſs un-

anſwer'd by one of his own: But when he found he was beginning to accuſe the Cruelty and unforgiving Temper of his Miſtreſs, he cou'd not forbear taking her part: Ah, Monſieur *Beauclair* (ſaid he) in ſpite of the Pity due to what I ſee you ſuffer, and the Inclination I have to be of your ſide, Juſtice now obliges me to engage in the Defence of one I know not, againſt him whoſe Friendſhip I profeſs an Ambition to become worthy of: I cannot think the Proceedings of that Lady are in the leaſt to be condemn'd: Had ſhe acted otherwiſe, you might, indeed, have applauded the Effects of a Paſſion which made you Maſter of your Wiſhes; but what muſt the diſintereſted Part of the World have thought of her Behaviour? Wou'd not the Meanneſs of her Spirit, and her eaſy Fondneſs, have been the Subject of Ridicule? By what yourſelf has ſaid, I find ſhe loves you,——loves you with a Tenderneſs, at leaſt, equal to your own;—and, doubtleſs, when ſhe pronounc'd the Sentence of your eternal Baniſhment, felt Torments greater than ſhe gave:——But there are ſome ſorts of Injuries which Honour cannot pardon; among which, I think, thoſe are ſhe has receiv'd from you. Yet, Heav'n, cry'd the half-diſtracted *Beauclair*, forgives the *penitent* Offender. Yes, reſum'd the other; but *here* the Caſe is widely different: The heavenly Mercy is accountable to nothing but itſelf; but we poor Mortals, whoſe Actions are cenſured by each other, and ſcarce the beſt can 'ſcape Reflection, muſt be cautious, ever watchful how we tread that ſlippery Road, the World's Opinion; for Reputation is ſo nice a Thing, ſo finely wrought, ſo liable to break, the leaſt falſe Step diſjoints the beauteous Frame, and down we ſink in endleſs Infamy.——Conſider, added he, the Reaſons why Women are, by our *Salique* Law, debarr'd from reigning? Why, in all Nations of the Earth, excluded from publick Management? Us'd but as Toys? Little immaterial Amuſements, to trifle away an Hour of idle Time with? Is it not becauſe their Levity of Nature, their

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weak Irreſolution, pleas'd and diſpleas'd oft at they know not what, and always in Extreams, makes them unfit for Council, for Secrecy, or Action?—— If one among them can tow'r above the Follies of her Sex, and awe her encroaching Paſſions with ſuperior Reaſon, we ſhould admire a Virtue ſo uncommon. ——And tho' the Freedom of my Speech ſhou'd loſe me the Honour of your Friendſhip, the Love I bear to Truth obliges me to ſay, that, in my Opinion, had *Montamour* granted to your Inconſtancy that kind Reward its contrary had merited, ſhe had proved the *Lover*, but not the Woman of *Diſcretion*, and had been guilty of an Injuſtice to herſelf, which I know not how ſhe wou'd have been able to account for. This Manner of arguing wou'd not, perhaps, have been very agreeable to Monſieur *Beauclair*, had it come from any other Mouth; but nothing was unpardonable from this young Favourite: He had already gain'd ſo great an Aſcendant over him, that it was in his Power to perſuade him almoſt to any Thing: Hurry'd by the Violence of his Deſpair, he had certainly had recourſe to ſome deſperate Remedy, to eaſe the preſent Anguiſh, had not the other's prudent Advice and philoſophical Reaſonings (which ſeem'd far above his Age) interpoſed to ſtay him: Whenever he found him more than ordinarily ſad, he wou'd endeavour to divert his Griefs, or when he found him (as ſometimes he did) tranſported with Exceſs of Paſſion, and appearing like one totally depriv'd of Reaſon, he wou'd for a while give way to the Tempeſt of his Deſpair, then gently parly with the Fury, till by Degrees he ſooth'd it to a Calm.— Never Man, overwhelm'd like him in Sorrows, met a Comforter ſo kind, ſo induſtrious, and ſo artful in allaying them; he look'd on him as his Guardian-Angel ſent down from Heaven to ſoften his impetuous Paſſions, and reſtore his Peace. It was ſeldom they were aſunder, but whenever it happen'd ſo, each ſeem'd to want the better half of himſelf:—— They eat together,——drank together; and *Beauclair*

wou'd very fain have perſuaded him to take Part of his Bed: But the other excus'd himſelf from that. He told him, that having been guilty of ſome youthful Follies, the Church had forbad him, by way of Mortification, the Eaſe of repoſing in a Bed for a certain Time: When Morning comes (ſaid he) I throw myſelf upon it, and tumble the Clothes, to prevent the People of the Houſe from taking notice; but for many Nights paſt have reſted on the Floor. *Beauclair* was himſelf too ſtrict an Obſerver of the Orders of the Church, to preſs him farther; and theſe were the only Hours in which they were ſeparated. Neither of them had been abroad ſince they came to *Paris*; and *Beauclair*, ſomething more eaſy than he had been, began to think it a Piece of Ingratitude that he had not yet paid a Viſit to the friendly *Friar*, by whoſe Inſtructions he had firſt gain'd Admittance to *Montamour:* He told *Vrayment* of it, and that he would that Day paſs ſome Hours with him. The other offer'd to accompany him, if he approv'd of it; which not being thought at all improper, they both went to the *Convent*, where they were told, the Perſon they enquir'd for was extremely ill, and unfit for Converſation. But *Beauclair*, whoſe Intimacy with him authoriz'd his Freedom, ran immediately to his *Cell*, leaving the *Chevalier* to divert himſelf in the Cloiſter-walks, till his Return. But how great was his Aſtoniſhment, when after having paid his Civilities to the *Friar*, and turning his Eyes a little on one Side, he ſaw a Perſon ſitting on the Bed by him, whom, in ſpite of the Darkneſs of the Place, he preſently knew to be *Du Lache!* All the Rage and Violence of Paſſion, which by the Artifices of his agreeable Companion were a little huſh'd to Peace, return'd at the Sight of this Villain: Scarce cou'd he reſtrain himſelf from ſacrificing him that Moment to his Reſentment. Villain! deteſted Monſter (cry'd he) have I found thee!——Comeſt thou to ſcatter thy abhorr'd Practices among the Saints!—He took him by the Throat, with theſe Words, and dragging

dragging him from the Bed, had his Sword half out: when the timorous Wretch, fearing to die, tho' unable to live, fell on his Knees, and begg'd him to forgive him; and the poor ſick *Friar*, ſtrangely alarm'd at what he ſaw and heard, cry'd out to him to forbear, and whatever his Injuries were, not to prophane that holy Place with Blood.———This Remonſtrance a little brought *Beauclair* to himſelf, and having begg'd his Pardon for giving him this Diſturbance, he turn'd to *Du Lache*, Riſe (ſaid he) thou Unworthy of the Name of Man!——O Monſieur! (interrupted he, by this time a little more aſſur'd) for the Love of Heav'n do not quite undo me;—I am already as miſerable as your Wiſh can make me,—do not betray me here, and my whole *future* Life ſhall be ſpent in an Endeavour to expiate the *paſt*. What new Deceit (reſum'd *Beauclair*) thou execrable Lyar, wou'dſt thou now impoſe upon me?—Permit me but a Moment's patient Hearing (anſwer'd the other) and I will confeſs all I have done;—you ſhall be let into the whole Secret, which as yet it is impoſſible you can know without me.

Tho' there was little of Truth to be expected from this Villain, yet *Beauclair* was willing to liſten to what he had to ſay; and perceiving he wou'd not declare himſelf before the *Friar*, went with him out of the Room. The Cloiſter-walks were pretty full of Company, and they walk'd together into a little Field behind the Convent; where *Du Lache*, as he had promis'd, related to *Beauclair* every Particular of the Treaſons he had been guilty of, both to him and *Montamour*. He told him alſo that the Baron *de Tortillée*, being perfectly recover'd of his Phrenzy, was return'd to *Paris*, and incens'd againſt his Lady, had taken care to deprive her of all thoſe Gallantries ſhe formerly had ſo freely indulg'd in, by confining her to her Chamber; and that himſelf, look'd on as a Perſon inſtrumental in her Amours, was proſecuted with his ſevereſt Reſentment; and that, on that Account, and the Misfortune of ſome Debts, he had

been oblig'd to abſcond, and concealing his Name in that of another, take Shelter in this *Convent*, where the Charity of the Fathers was all his Dependance. Though *Beauclair* had been before wholly aſſur'd of the Innocence of *Montamour*, yet he cou'd not be inform'd of the Truth of thoſe Artifices by which he had been enſnar'd into a contrary Opinion, without lifting up his Eyes and Hands in token of Amazement; and tho' he knew nothing of the diſtracting Potion which had been given to the *Baron*, his intended Murder, nor a thouſand other helliſh Practices, yet he ſtood ſtruck dumb with Wonder that three could be three ſuch prodigious Villains in the World, as *Du Lache*, and his Confederates *Toncarr* and *Le Songe*. But while he was thus employ'd, an Accident happen'd, which more than ever inform'd him how dangerous it was for a Man of Honour to be of the Acquaintance of ſuch Wretches.

FULL of troubled Cogitations, the unhappy *Baron* avoided as much as poſſible all Society: His Misfortunes were publick, and he could not imagine any body look'd on him without Pity, or deſpiſing that Weakneſs which had ſuffer'd him to fall into them. Chance, or his ill Genius, led him into that Field, at the very Hour, at the very Moment, that theſe two were in Conference. He immediately knew the Villain he ſo long had ſought; but the Sight of *Beauclair* fill'd him with more violent Agitations: Ever ſince the Knowledge of his Wrongs, he had imagin'd this Gentleman was the prime Cauſe of them; nor was this Thought altogether oppoſite to Reaſon, conſidering the Manner in which he once had found him with his Wife; and now beholding him thus accompany'd, was ſufficient to confirm thoſe Conjectures.—Now all the Injuries he had ſuſtain'd, his violated Honour,—his ruin'd Fortune,—his Madneſs,—his intended Murder, all at once preſented themſelves to his Remembrance!—and fatally tranſported with Exceſs of Rage, he drew his Sword, and flew on the aſtoniſh'd *Beauclair*, giving him no other Warning

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of the Danger which he threaten'd, than that Action. It was indeed ſufficient to make him ſtand upon his Guard; but being deſirous to know on what Account, or by whom he was ſo challeng'd (for, in his preſent Surprize, he ſaw not that it was the *Baron*) he ſtepp'd two or three Steps back, and was opening his Mouth to enquire the Cauſe of ſo unexpected a Salutation; when the other, ſtill advancing, cry'd out to him to ſtay: Recoil not, baſe, unworthy Man! diſhonourable *Beauclair!* (ſaid he) but if you are not Coward too, as well as Villain, defend the Wrongs you have done me with the ſame Boldneſs as you acted them. Ha! (reply'd *Beauclair*, equally provok'd, and who art thou who dar'ſt to join ſuch Language with the Name of *Beauclair?*—Is it poſſible (continu'd he, looking more earneſtly on him) that the Baron *de Tortillée* ſhould ſo forget himſelf? 'Tis thou (reſum'd the impatient Baron, that haſt forgot thy Virtue,—debaſed the Honour of thy noble Family,—and render'd thyſelf a Companion of Panders, Vagabonds, and Ruffians!———But we trifle Time:——This Woman's War of Words is not for Men, who ought to hate like us! As much addicted to Paſſion as *Beauclair* naturally was, he would, if poſſible, have avoided this Combat; but the other reſolving to afford no longer Parley, preſs'd on him ſo hard, that he was oblig'd to make uſe of his beſt Skill for his Defence. *Du Lache* had all this while his Sword out too, not with a Deſign to prevent them from doing each other a Miſchief, but to take Part with which ever was like to be the Conqueror. The *Baron*, whether it was that he was leſs expert, or that, tranſported by his Fury, he ruſh'd too eagerly on his Antagoniſt, is uncertain; but *Beauclair* had the good Fortune to diſarm him at the third Paſs. Sufficiently ſatisfied with this Advantage, and rejoic'd this Adventure had terminated in no worſe a Cataſtrophe, he was preparing to redeliver him his Sword, with all complaiſant and ſincere Inclinations imaginable for a thorough Reconciliation, when the

miſchievous Stander-by ſtab'd him in the Back with ſo accurs'd a Force, that the unhappy Gentleman fell with the Wound, and ſpoke or breath'd no more. Thus ended a Life, which, if not blemiſh'd by a too great Affection for the moſt vile of Women, might have been long and happy. *Beauclair*, ſtruck motionleſs with ſudden Horror at a Deed ſo monſtrous, ſeem'd like one transfix'd with Thunder; and before he could recollect himſelf enough for Speech, or the Murderer could determine what way wou'd afford moſt Security for his Eſcape, they were encompaſſed by a Croud of People which the Cries of the Chevalier *Vreyment* had drawn together. That young Spark having ſeen *Beauclair* and *Du Lache* (whom he very well knew) go haſtily croſs the Walks, he follow'd them into the Field, apprehenſive that they were gone thither on no friendly Purpoſe. He obſerv'd their Behaviour at a Diſtance, till the Approach of the *Baron*; and the Manner in which he accoſted *Beauclair*, made him reſolve to truſt nothing to Fortune, but timely endeavour to hinder whatever Conſequences either Rage or Treachery might attempt; yet fearful to leave them while he ran for Help, he bethought him of calling to ſome Men whom he ſaw cleaning the Way on the other Side of the Wall which encompaſſed the Field he was in. They preſently reſounded the Cry of Murder, which echoing from one to the other, gather'd Numbers immediately, which, though they had a good way to come round, were at the Heels of *Vreyment* when he got to the fatal Scene. *Du Lache*, when they came near, was looking widely round, as tho' diſtracted with the Horrors of his Guilt, his Sword lying on the Graſs, dyed to the Hilt with Blood; *Beauclair*, with both the Swords ſtill in his Hand, his Head a little reclin'd, and ſtooping over the dead Body, which was fallen juſt at his Feet: The Sight of *Vrayment*, and the Noiſe of thoſe that follow'd, rous'd him from his Lethargy, and he preſently cry'd, O my Friend! behold this dreadful Object!—Then turn your Eyes

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on that conſummate Fiend (whom yet you know not, but by my Deſcription) the curs'd *Du Lache*. Before the Perſon to whom theſe Words were addreſs'd could make any Reply, a robuſt Fellow bawl'd out, A dreadful Murder indeed, my Maſters! but 'tis hard to know which of theſe two, or whether both, are not guilty of it. 'Tis true (ſaid another); therefore let us carry them both away to the Officers of Juſtice. Ay, ay, hollow'd out the whole Croud, away with them both. It would have been but to little Purpoſe to have argued with the Multitude, had they endeavour'd it: But *Beauclair* was willing to go, that the murd'rous *Du Lache* might receive the due Reward of all his Crimes; nor did that Wretch ſeem now ſo timorous as might have been expected from his cowardly Diſpoſition: He fed himſelf with a ſecret Hope that he might be able, by his Inſinuations, to make *Beauclair* appear at leaſt a Party concern'd, if not a chief Inſtrument of the *Baron*'s Death; which if he could once bring to be believ'd, the Sentence muſt be the ſame on both; and then he doubted not but that Gentleman had Intereſt enough to procure a Pardon, which muſt, where the Guilt was equal, extend to one as well as the other. The *Chevalier* was not at all diſſatisfied, as not doubting but the bloody Sword of *Du Lache*, and his own Evidence, who ſaw the Murder, wou'd be ſufficient to clear *Beauclair* immediately; but he found himſelf miſtaken. The known Amour which he had had with the Wife of the Deceas'd, and the Intimacy which had been taken notice of between him and the Murderer, went a great way to make him appear guilty of conſenting to his Death: But nothing could be determin'd till the Trial, which was order'd ſhou'd be in a few Days; and, in the mean time, both were ſent to Priſon, neither being allow'd the Privilege of Bail.

VRAYMENT appear'd much more concern'd than *Beauclair* was for himſelf, and omitted nothing, during the Time of his Confinement, which could be

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expected from the moſt zealous Friendſhip: He went to all his Acquaintance, to engage them to appear in his Behalf on the Day prefix'd for the Tryal: But tho' many did, and his Character was ſuch, as cou'd give no one leave to imagine he cou'd be guilty of a Baſeneſs, ſuch as he was call'd in queſtion for, yet the *Baron*'s Relations were ſo vigorous in their Proſecution, that in ſpite of all *Vrayment* (who ſaw the whole Tranſaction) cou'd ſay, the Court began to think it wou'd be very difficult to acquit him. The *Baroneſs* having, by *Toncarr* and *Le Songe*, been accuſed of a Deſign to murder her Huſband, was alſoſummon'd to appear; and *Du Lache* having found means to ſend to her while he was in Priſon, let her know the only way for their common Safety was to accuſe *Beauclair*. She did it, to his Face, with an Aſſurance ſuch as ſure no Woman but herſelf cou'd ever boaſt; and to make her Evidence bear the greater Appearance of Truth, with counterfeited Bluſhes, and Streams of Tears, ſhe confeſs'd her criminal Affection for him had won her Conſent to the *Baron*'s Death, that ſhe might give herſelf wholly to him. Never was any Soul alarm'd, confus'd, enrag'd, like *Beauclair*, when he heard this monſtrous Allegation; ſcarce cou'd he contain himſelf in the Preſence of the Judge, (who happen'd to be the Brother of *Montamour*) from ſpeaking to that bad Woman, when he denied what he was charg'd with, in Terms ſuch as her Impudence deſerv'd; but all that he cou'd ſay without being guilty of an Indecorum to Modeſty, or Irreverence to the Preſence he was in, he did. This Accuſation, however, had a very great Influence on the Judge, who imagin'd preſently that this Amour was the Occaſion of his Siſter's breaking with him; and the Indignity which he thought was offer'd to his Family, by preferring a Woman of the *Baroneſs*'s Character to a Maid whoſe Reputation had ever been unblemiſh'd, heighten'd his Diſpleaſure againſt the Priſoner to ſo great a Degree, that he was juſt going to pronounce him deſerving the ſame Fate with *Du Lache*; when

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Vrayment, eaſily gueſſing what his Thoughts were, and diſtracted to find all he cou'd do to ſave him was in vain; and is then my Evidence, my Lord (ſaid he) no more to be regarded? I, who was Witneſs to every Part of the whole Action, and know *Beauclair* as free from any Share in this Guilt, as Heaven is from Falſhood; or Hell, or theſe his vile Accuſers, from Truth. ———You ſpeak with Paſſion, young *Monſieur*, reply'd the Judge, which in a Caſe like this, ſavours too much of Partiality, to be regarded:——You are his Friend;——and Friendſhip may be byaſs'd. I ſcorn the Thought (interrupted fiercely the enrag'd *Vrayment*) I love *Beauclair*, 'tis true; but 'tis becauſe his Virtues challenge my Eſteem: ——Did I but think he cou'd forego his Honour, and become an Accomplice with theſe horrid Wretches, I wou'd be the firſt ſhou'd urge your Juſtice to condemn him: But as I know him clear,———clear as my own Soul,——as yours, my Lord, or any here, from ſuch deteſted Crimes, I muſt, I will ſtand up in his Vindication, tho' the whole World ſhould cenſure and hate me for it. While he was uttering theſe Words, the Judge look'd on him with an Eye which ſpoke Amazement; and not replying preſently, a Friend of the dead *Baron*'s, one who had appear'd the moſt zealous of any of them in his Revenge, took this Opportunity to endeavour to weaken what this young Champion had offer'd in Defence of *Beauclair*. I hope, my Lord (ſaid he) the Teſtimony of one, bold tho' he ſeems, ſo much unknown, and doubtleſs bought, will be of little Weight, when Circumſtances ſo plain make void his Evidence. Injurious Man, (reſum'd the little Hero) know I was bred to hate a Lye: ———Nor ſhall I be unknown when he, by whoſe Sentence I, in my Friend, muſt ſtand or fall, ſhall ſee this Token. With theſe Words he pluck'd a Ring off his Finger, and preſented it to the Judge; who after he had taken it, look'd carefully on it, then on him that gave it, and riſing from his Seat, I am enough convinc'd (ſaid he) and here pronounce

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the Witneſs moſt ſubſtantial, and *Beauclair* innocent, —Let the Court adjourn: To-morrow the other Priſoners muſt attend their Doom. It was to little Effect that the Friends of the Deceas'd petition'd for a further Hearing. The univerſal Joy which appear'd in the Faces of all the diſintereſted Part of the Aſſembly, and the loud Clap which they gave when *Beauclair* was acquitted, huſh'd the feeble Murmurs of the contrary Party. As the Judge paſs'd by the Bar where *Beauclair* was ſtanding, he took him by the Hand, and ſpeaking to him in a low Voice, dine with me to-day (ſaid he) and be ſure to bring your young Advocate with you. The other had no time to make any other Anſwer to this obliging Invitation, than a low Bow; but the Surprize he was in at this ſudden Change of his Affairs was ſuch, as it would be very difficult to repreſent. He could not, however, in this publick Place, have Leiſure for Reflection: He was immediately ſurrounded by a great Number of his Friends and Acquaintance, who came to congratulate him on being clear'd. When the Preſs was a little over, *Vrayment* came up to him, and with a Countenance much more grave than he had ever ſeen him wear, You are now ſafe, *Monſieur* (ſaid he) but beware how you hereafter enter into Engagements with Perſons of the *Baroneſs*'s Humour. *Beauclair*, unwilling to hold any Diſcourſe on an Affair which he would have been glad to bury in Oblivion, anſwer'd theſe Words only with a Sigh, and a little Shaking of his Head: But after he had embrac'd and thank'd him for the Service he had done him, owning it was to him (as indeed it was) that he was indebted for his Life, he entreated him to inform him, by what Means he came to know the Judge, and what the Myſtery of the Ring was, which like ſome Enchantment, had the Power in a Moment to unlock his Fetters, and reverſe his Doom. Of that (reply'd *Vrayment*) you ſhall be told hereafter; but you muſt pardon me if I ſay it is a Secret, which, at preſent, you muſt not be inform'd of. I will not preſs it then (reſum'd *Beauclair*); but perhaps, at the *Judge*'s Houſe,

to

to which he has engag'd me to bring you to-day, you will be good-natur'd enough to eaſe my Curioſity. 'Tis highly poſſible, indeed (anſwer'd the *Chevalier*) that there the Riddle may be ſolv'd. They paſs'd from this to ſeveral other Subjects of Converſation relating to the Trial, 'till the Hour drawing near, in which they were to wait on the Judge, *Vrayment* excus'd himſelf from going with him, ſaying he had ſome Buſineſs another Way, which he was obliged to diſpatch; but when that was ended, he might expect to ſee him. The other entreating him not to fail, took his Leave for a much longer Time than he imagin'd.

The Judge, who waited with Impatience for their coming, receiv'd *Beauclair* with all imaginable Civility and Kindneſs; till finding he was alone, he a little alter'd his Countenance, and with a Voice which expreſs'd his Diſcontent, What, *Monſieur* (ſaid he) would ſhe not come?———Or did you fear to truſt her in a Brother's Houſe? What means my Lord (cried the other, more ſurpriz'd, if poſſible, at theſe Words, than all his late Adventures). You counterfeit a Conſternation well (reſum'd the former) tho' I know not for what Cauſe:——My Meaning needs, I think, no Explanation:——You were not, as I take it the only invited Gueſt.——Moſt true, my Lord (anſwer'd *Beauclair*); and could my Perſuaſions have prevail'd on the Chevalier *Vrayment*, to put off to another Day a Buſineſs he had appointed on this, I had not ſingly waited on you. The Judge thinking himſelf trifled with, began to loſe great Part of his Patience: You do ill, *Monſieur* (ſaid he) to reward the kind Intentions I had for you in this Manner:—Why do you pretend to keep me in Ignorance of what, by this time, you muſt be ſenſible I know full well?——Why, when I demand to ſee my Siſter, do you make an Excuſe for the Abſence of the Chevalier *Vrayment?* Ha! (interrupted the tranſported Lover, half wild 'twixt Extaſy and Wonder) what ſaid your Lordſhip?—Your Siſter—O bleſs

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my exulting Soul, and tell me all!——Is it poſſible, (rejoin'd her Brother) that you ſhould need be told by any but herſelf, that *Montamour* and *Vrayment* are the ſame? O Heavens! cried *Beauclair*, now quite o'ercome with Rapture: O all ye gracious Powers, is it poſſible! All that he could ſay was ſcarce ſufficient to make the Judge believe his Siſter could be in *Paris*, and ſo intimate with her Lover, and remain unknown to him, till he recounted to him his Progreſs to the Monaſtery, the Severity of her Uſage to him there, and the Improbability there was, that ſhe ſhould have alter'd her Reſolution. Neither of them knew what to think:——That it was ſhe, was evident, tho' her Hair and Complection was alter'd, which might eaſily be perform'd by Art. The Features of her Face, her Voice, were perfectly known to her Brother; and more than all, the Ring ſhe gave him, which was one he had put on her Finger at parting, left no room to doubt it was any other than herſelf; but how ſo wonderful a Change had happen'd, or for what Reaſon ſhe had left the Monaſtery ſo diſguis'd, and come in Search of the Man ſhe had ſo induſtriouſly ſtrove to avoid, was what puzzled the Capacities of them both. After ſome little Time of Expectation, *Beauclair* began to fear that it was in vain to hope ſhe would make good her Promiſe of meeting him there, and ran home, believing he might probably find her: But how great was his Diſappointment, when he was told the *Chevalier* had diſcharged his Lodgings, and had not given any Intimation where he deſign'd to go! Full of a thouſand perplex'd Reflections for this Second Ruin of his Hopes, he return'd to her Brother with the melancholy Account, and found him reading a Letter he had juſt receiv'd from her.

As ſoon as the Brother of *Montamour* ſaw him enter, you need not, *Monſieur* (ſaid he) give yourſelf the Trouble of repeating our common Misfortune; the Perſon we both, tho' prompted by different Emotions, are ſo impatient to embrace, reſolves we ſhall

ſhall not at leaſt for a while, enjoy the Happineſs we aim at. See here (continu'd he, giving him the Letter) the Intelligence I have juſt now received. *Beauclair* had no ſooner caſt his Eye upon it, than he knew the Character to be *Montamour*'s, and, with a Mixture of Hope and Fear, as tho' about to unravel the Myſtery of his future Fate, read o'er theſe Lines:

I Am ſenſible it is now too late, to entreat my deareſt Brother to keep from Monſieur Beauclair *the Knowledge who the Perſon was that endeavour'd to do him Service at his Tryal: But that I did not ſatisfy yours and my own Deſire, in ſeeing you at your Houſe, was, becauſe I could not bear to appear in my own Shape before a Man who has affronted me in the Manner you are now no Stranger to. However, my late Behaviour may inform you I am not deſirous of Revenge: ——His Repentance ſince has, perhaps been Puniſhment ſufficient, and I would not have you leſs willing to forgive.—I have alſo a Pardon to beg for myſelf, for making uſe of your Name to countenance my Elopement from the Monaſtery, and conceal the Pity I had for an unworthy Lover in the Pretence of Tenderneſs for the beſt of Brothers.—Yes, I confeſs, that diſturb'd at ſome Teſtimonies I had of his Deſpair, I told the* Abbeſs *that I could not profeſs till I had once more bid adieu to you, and by that means gain'd her Conſent to come to* Paris. *Judge not too unkindly of this Deceit, but believe you are, and ever ſhall be, moſt dear to the Soul of*

Your Affectionate Siſter, and

Obliged Humble Servant,

MONTAMOUR.

BEAUCLAIR had ſcarce finiſh'd the Reading this, when his Servant brought him another, which he told him was given him by the Chevalier *Vrayment*, with

a ſtrict Charge to deliver it to his Hands. The hearing that Name, and the Sight of this ſecond Mandate encreas'd the Tumults of his Soul to ſuch a Height, that the Diſorder he was in, was what nothing but itſelf can repreſent: To comprehend in any Meaſure what it was he felt, 'tis neceſſary to be poſſeſs'd of all thoſe burning Paſſions,———thoſe diſtracting Whirls of torturing Thought, which ſcarce afforded Patience till he could unfold the dear, and at once welcome and unwelcome Paper, which contain'd theſe Words:

To Monſieur BEAUCLAIR.

THINK not, becauſe I have given you Proofs of an unextinguiſh'd Tenderneſs, that I think your Penitence a ſufficient Expiation for your Crimes, nor that my Pity for your Sufferings can influence me ſo far as to make me forget what I owe to my own Honour.——No, Beauclair! *there is a Juſtice to be done one's ſelf, which if I ſhould diſpenſe with, you might perhaps, and indeed with much more Reaſon than hitherto you have had, be perſuaded to believe, I might hereafter fail in it towards you—What tho' you ſwear your Heart was ever mine,——what tho' your late Repentance and Deſpair induces me to think that Proteſtation real, the World, the judging World will never be of my Opinion.—My eaſy Nature, and my fond Belief, would be the Jeſt of every Table.—All I can do for you, therefore, and I know not if by the Grave and Wiſe that would not be thought too much, is to wiſh it were as much in my Power to reward that Tenderneſs you now have for me, as it is to pardon thoſe paſt Actions which have made us both unhappy. I cannot, without deviating from that Sincerity which has ever been the Dictator of all my Words, deny that my Love for you has ever been unſhaken,—that it was not even in your own Power to leſſen one Grain of that exhauſtleſs Store of Paſſion you inſpir'd me*

me with—that it ſtill blazes with a Flame ſo pure, ſo true, ſo laſting, as not Time, nor Abſence, nor Unkindneſs can put a Damp to;——that my whole Soul is full of you;——and that in putting in Execution that cruel, but neceſſary Reſolution of flying from your Sight for ever, I ſuffer Pangs more terrible than Death itſelf cou'd be: But entertain no Hope from this Confeſſion, nor attempt to alter a Determination which is fix'd as Fate.—Write not to me, unleſs you can reſtrain your Sentiments to ſuch Bounds as may be fitly read by one of that Order I am going to profeſs myſelf:——But above all things, I conjure you not to make uſe of any Stratagems for the future to diſtract me with the Sight of your Deſpair.—The Thought of it is more than I can bear!—Heaven! Heaven only! can enable me to ſupport the coming killing Certainty, which takes from me all Poſſibility of ever being

Yours,

MONTAMOUR.

WHO that has been preſent when Death's Icy Hand has on the ſudden ſeiz'd on the Faculties of ſome one in Company, may figure to themſelves what *Beauclair* was at reading this! Juſt ſo the Blood flew from his Lips and Cheeks, his Eyes grew dim, the Life and Vigour of his Air chang'd to cold Trembling, all his Limbs enervate, and down at once he ſunk into the Chair he was ſitting on. The Brother of *Montamour* gueſſing the Cauſe of his Diſorder, took the Letter from his ſhaking Hand, and inform'd himſelf at full of what he before ſuſpected. Come, *Monſieur* (ſaid he) recall your Courage; I ſee nothing in this Letter that can give you Cauſe of Chagrin, but rather the contrary:—My Siſter makes a Declaration here of Tenderneſs, much greater than I could have imagin'd from her Reſerve;———and ſince ſhe loves, take my Word for it, neither of you ſhall deſpair. The dejected Lover cou'd not recover himſelf

himſelf enough to make any other Anſwer to theſe obliging Expreſſions than a Sigh: But the other, continuing to aſſure him, in the Manner he had begun, that he wou'd not reſt till he had procur'd his Happineſs, made a viſible Alteration in his Countenance, and by little and little, he became again the Man he was.

NOR was the Judge forgetful of what he had promis'd; but, becauſe it was impoſſible to proſecute the Deſign he had form'd till the Affair of the Priſoners was diſpatch'd, he commanded their Appearance the very next Day. The Crime of *Du Lache*, as being the immediate Murderer of the unhappy *Baron*, was too evident for any Thing to be offer'd in Oppoſition to his Sentence, which was to be broke upon the Wheel; *Toncarr* and *Le Songe*, having been prov'd by the Witneſs of the Gentleman and the Servants who reſcu'd the *Baron*, to have aſſaſſinated and deſign'd his Death, receiv'd the ſame Doom: But the *Baroneſs*, though the known Contriver and Abettor of the horrid Deed, was remanded back to Priſon, till he had more Leiſure to conſult in what Manner he ſhould decree her Puniſhment.

THIS being over, he immediately ſet forward with Monſieur *Beauclair* to the Monaſtery where *Montamour* had reſolv'd to paſs the Remainder of her Life. They arriv'd there the very Day before that in which ſhe was deſign'd to take the Order: Her Brother found an eaſy Admittance to her; But not all the Arguments he cou'd alledge were of Force to engage her Conſent to ſee *Beauclair*, till he, who had waited in an outer Room expecting to be call'd in, as the Judge had made him hope, growing impatient at this long Delay, and reſolving to hear once more from *Montamour*'s own Mouth his Doom, ran haſtily in to them, and throwing himſelf at her Feet, pleaded his own Cauſe with ſuch Succeſs, that though ſhe did not abſolutely promiſe to grant all he aſk'd, yet there appear'd a ſort of conſenting in her Eyes;

Eyes; which her Brother obſerving, back'd the Interceſſions of the other with Arguments ſo ſtrenuous, that ſhe was wholly at a Loſs for Words to form Denials, if the Relentings of her ſwelling Heart wou'd have dictated them, to what her Lover and her Brother urg'd. The Abbeſs, whoſe Company on this extraordinary Occaſion was deſir'd, join'd her Perſuaſions; and had *Montamour* been leſs prompted from within, it had been hardly poſſible to have held out againſt ſuch united Forces. In fine, ſhe was at laſt prevail'd on to give her *Hand* to him, from whom nothing cou'd eſtrange her *Heart*. They were marry'd that Evening; and it wou'd be needleſs to endeavour, as well as impoſſible to ſet forth, as it deſerv'd, the Raptures of the over-joy'd *Beauclair* at ſo unhop'd-for a Condeſcenſion. It was not many Days between their going and coming back to *Paris*; yet at their Return, they met the Tidings of an Act of Horror which they little expected: The wicked *Baroneſs*, impatient of her Fate, deſperate, and, as ſome ſay, ſtruck with Remorſe, and terrified in Conſcience, hopeleſs of Mercy here or hereafter, had ſwallow'd Poiſon, and ended her ſhameful Life by as ignominious a Death: The three Wretches, who had been the Inſtruments of her vile Actions, ſuffer'd the Sentence which had been given by the Judge, and with their laſt Breaths allow'd the Juſtice of it, and confeſs'd their Crimes. Thus was not only the *Baron*'s Death reveng'd at full, but alſo the Diſquiet which the Contrivers of it had brought on the innocent *Montamour* and her belov'd *Beauclair*. The Manner of their living together ſince their Marriage is ſuch as might be expected from that unalterable Affection which each felt for the other before, and full of that ſincere Tenderneſs which might furniſh many more Examples, were Love and Virtue the chief Inducements to *Hymen*.

POEMS

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

By Mrs. *ELIZA HAYWOOD.*

The FOURTH EDITION.

VOL. II. M

POEMS

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

An Irregular ODE.

To Mr. WALTER BOWMAN, *Profeſſor of the* MATHEMATICKS. *Occaſion'd by his objecting againſt my giving the Name of* HILLARIUS *to* Aaron Hill, *Eſq*;

OWN the Name, which to my Muſe owes Birth,
Is far beneath the mighty Wearer's Worth:
But ſay, what Means can tortur'd Wit invent
Charms to *deſcribe* which in *Idea* pain?
Can Reading ſhew a Word of ſuch Extent,
To graſp a Glory *Thought* can ſcarce contain?

To me impoſſible it ſeems;
But *thou*, alas! art far remov'd from me by vaſt Extremes.
Unſkill'd in Science, in rude Ign'rance bred:
Unhappy that I am
(For mine is not the *Blame*)
Learning's ſweet Paths I ne'er was taught to tread;
But if ſuch Force in well-plac'd Letters dwells,
Which can all Heaven epitomize,
Contract Immenſity to narrow Space,
Wide different Beauties in one Round comprize,
And blend their Luſtre in a mix'd Embrace,
Thine is the Art, great Bard! and thine the pow'rful Spels!
Thou! who canſt travel Nature's Secrets o'er,
And all Philoſophy's dark Depths explore!
Thou! who to Worlds unknown canſt point the Way,
And to benighted Reaſon lend a Ray,
To guide the Wand'rer led too long aſtray!
Do *thou* exert thy oft-try'd Skill,
And what might thouſand Volumes fill
(Yet Language ſeem unable to diſcharge)
In one all-meaning *Fiat* ſpeak at large!
By thy inſpective Power
Deſcry ſome lucky Hour,
When the Sloth-ſhedding Sway of *Saturn* yields
To *Mercury*'s inſpiring Reign,
When vigorous Planets rule the Azure Fields,
And warmly actuate Man's inventive Brain:
Study can know no nobler Aim,
Than to find out ſome comprehenſive Name,
For him, whom to admire, is the beſt Plea for Fame.

A Name

A Name it muſt be which implies
At once the Wonders of his Soul and Eyes:
Cherubial Sweetneſs! God-like Majeſty!
Numberleſs Myriads of Divinities,
Which, ſparkling in his Looks! his Words! his Works! we ſee:
Harmonious let it be in Sound,
Yet with Solemnity abound;
With Heaven-turn'd Notes adorn the nervous Senſe,
Soft as his Voice! but lofty as his Mien!
Each thrilling Syllable pleas'd Awe impart,
Which thro' the Ear may ſtrike the Heart,
With rapt'rous Tremblings touch the Strings of Life:
Make Extaſy within itſelf at Strife
'Twixt Tenderneſs and Reverence:
To the *Mind*'s Eye make every Glory ſeen,
And the wrap'd Soul feel all his Force, tho' Worlds ſhould ruſh between:
But if thou ſeek'ſt what Learning cannot ſhow,
For all in vain, I fear, is human Art,
To the great Source of perfect Knowledge go:
Shake off Mortality, and on a Beam
Of tow'ring Thought, ſwift through the Æther dart!
Where blazing Galaxies of Light
Strike the aw'd Eye, and dazle vulgar Sight:
Nor, till thou reach the Throne of the *Supreme*,
Let meaner Views retard the advent'rous Flight.
There Moſes, David, Gideon, and the reſt
Of the immortal Bleſt,
Who by his deathleſs Lays more glorious ſhine,
Will hail thy glad Approach in ſhouting Throngs,
And bid thee welcome to the Realms divine;

Both Saints and Angels forward thy Requeſt:
(Angels are his Admirers too,
And copy Hallelujahs from his Songs)
Nor ſhall thy Wiſhes vainly ſue,
Th'Almighty's ſelf will ſmile with pleas'd Regard,
And give thy darling Genius this Reward:
Of all who Tribute paid,
Of thee it ſhall be ſaid
Heaven's darling Care ſtands all to thee confeſt,
Thou know'ſt him moſt, and can'ſt deſcribe him beſt:
But till that Day my boaſtful Pride ſhall live;
A Pride ſo vaſt, as Empire could not give!
Far as Creation reaches, ſhall the Name
Eliza choſe, tune the whole Voice of Fame:
The wafting Air ſhall bear the Accents round,
And all the wide Expanſe echo the rapt'rous Sound:
Thro' every Orb *Hillarius* ſhall be heard,
And Altars to his ſhining Virtues rear'd.
Hillarius there, as *here*, be underſtood
By all the Wiſe, the Brave, the Great, and Good.

Climene's Complaint

TO

MIRTILLO.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

AS injur'd *Sappho*, when by *Phaon* left,
Of Joy, of Comfort, and of Peace bereft,
In tuneful Notes her wretched State bewail'd,
Yet nothing on the perjur'd Swain prevail'd;
So I, though in a leſs harmonious Strain,
With like Succeſs of greater Wrongs complain.
A far more lovely *Phaon* I have loſt,
And more than *Sappho* is *Climene* croſs'd:
Her ſoft'ning Muſe could give her Mind Relief;
But mine ſerves only to increaſe my Grief:

My Thoughts confus'd, to wild Diſtraction bend,
And different Paſſions in my Breaſt contend.
The Violence of both too well I prove,
Reſtrain'd by *Honour*, and puſh'd on by *Love*:
Pride bids me your Indifference diſdain,
But *Love* prevails to call you back again;
Since, to ſubmit, 'tis then ſo hard a Taſk,
Ah! let me not *Mirtillo*, vainly aſk:
Return, return, my faithleſs Dear, return!
No longer let the poor *Climene* mourn!
Climene! who for thee the World deſpis'd;
Climene! once by thee ſo juſtly priz'd!
How often on ſome fragrant Bank we've ſat,
By ſhady Trees defended from the Heat?
No Ornament th' adjacent Meads could wear;
You ſtripp'd their Beauties to adorn my Hair:
Nor was your Kindneſs ill by me repaid,
I wove 'em into Chaplets for your Head:
Tir'd with this innocent Felicity,
Buſineſs you feign; but did you love like me,
I ſhould your moſt important Buſineſs be!
Chang'd is your Mind ſince *Paris*' Choice you prais'd,
Who, by the Hope of Love and Beauty rais'd,
Adjudg'd the long-conteſted golden Prize,
Alone was due to *Venus*' conqu'ring Eyes.
Juno would now the envy'd Pref'rence claim,
And *Love* be thought an empty airy Name.
For Greatneſs you forſake the ſhady Grove,
And to the loud tumultuous Town remove;
Unjuſt, unkind *Mirtillo!*——But, no more:
Complaints are fruitleſs, vainly I implore;
More deaf than Seas or Winds to my Requeſt,
And more impregnable than Rocks thy Breaſt.

When

When *Theſeus Ariadne* had betray'd,
She was in Heav'n a Conſtellation made:
Snatch'd by th' indulgent God from Earth to Skies,
Her perjur'd Lover's Scorn ſhe now defies.
Ah! why will not ſome pitying Pow'r beſtow
Compaſſion on the loſt *Climene*'s Woe?
Not to be great your Favour I implore;
Annihilate my Soul, I aſk no more.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

COULD my faint Verſe but copy what I feel;
But half the Pangs of my rack'd Soul reveal;
Thy gen'rous Heart would pity my Diſtreſs,
And eaſe that Anguiſh which I can't expreſs.
For, Oh! 'tis only in thy Pow'r t'appeaſe
My warring Thoughts, and bid my Tumults ceaſe.

BUT firſt reflect (thou God of my Deſires)
What ſort of Paſſion, Worth like thine inſpires;
Think what a vaſt Profuſion of Delight
My wondrous Love, thy wondrous Charms excite!
By thy own Merits, thou my Zeal may'ſt prove,
And by th'almighty Cauſes judge my Love:
Both are ſo vaſt, ſo far ſurpaſſing all,
That perfect, great, or excellent we call,
Each ſtands alone a bright Original!

YET ſtill thus bleſt with more than mortal Joys,
Prophetick Fears my Happineſs deſtroys!

Strange

Strange Shiv'rings run thro' every vital Part,
And a dead Damp o'erſpreads my trembling Heart!
Alarm'd Deſire, ev'n in your Arms is chill'd,
As early Bloſſoms by rough Blaſts are kill'd!
Cold Apprehenſion midſt of Rapture ſteals,
And Heav'n and Hell at once my Boſom feels!

Nor are theſe Omens vain; a Day will come
When Love no more ſhall in your Thoughts have Room;
When tir'd, Deſire ſhall to Remorſe give way,
And cool Reflection to your View diſplay
All my Demerits, and my Faults betray:
When I, abandon'd and deſpis'd, muſt fly
To ſome dark Shade, and there forgotten lie,
'Till Fate in Pity gives me Leave to die.
Nor dare t'upbraid your too, too juſt Diſdain;
But only on penurious Heav'n complain!
In humble Grief, my Want of Charms deplore;
But lift my Eyes to Hope and you no more!

If therefore, aught be true that you pretend,
If with the Lover you avow the Friend;
Forbear to urge my Wiſhes to their Height,
Leſt ſudden Woe o'ertake the daring Flight,
And down, at once, I ſink in endleſs Night.
No farther let me tread the glitt'ring Maze,
But at becoming Diſtance humbly gaze;
Adore the Glories of your God-like Soul,
And all the Softneſs of my own controul.

Chear'd with your Sight, wiſh no ſuperior Bliſs,
And all the Train of fond Deſires diſmiſs:
But, Oh! too far my heedleſs Love has ſtray'd,
Too much the Dictates of Deſire obey'd;
And I, perhaps, by Reaſon's Jury caſt,
In vain aſk Mercy when my Doom is paſt.

Tranſlated

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

WEARY, deteſting all Society,
Since ſhunn'd by him I only wiſh'd to ſee,
I fly the chearleſs Sight of human Kind,
Seek Solitude befitting my ſad Mind:
Where unalarm'd, and free
From Inſults and from Flattery,
Since in a Lethargy of Thought,
Might be diſſolv'd, *Timoleon* forgot,
And future Time glide on, unfelt, in bleſt Stupidity.

BUT, when to unfrequented Wilds I run,
Or hide me in ſome Day-defying Gloom,
Where the bright Lamp of Heav'n ne'er ſhone,
And Night ſeems ever but begun!
Cruel *Remembrance* perſecutes me ſtill,
And diſappoints my Will;
Shews what I *was*, with what I'm now become,
And racks my Brain with curs'd Compariſon.

WHAT ſhall I do? Alas! I ſtrive in vain;
Long-loſt Repoſe I *never* muſt regain:
Where'er I go, *Timoleon* is there!
Even Darkneſs cannot hide him from my Sight,
His fatal Beams dart thro' the Veil of Night,
To my Soul's Eye his Glories all appear,
And wake Reflection with too glaring Light!

The

The ſleeping Paſſions at the quick'ning Blaze
Start to new Life, and hoſtile Vigour gain.
All Foes alike to Reaſon's Sway,
Each his whole Force diſplays
To torture or betray,
With *Shews* of Pleaſure, or with *real* Pain.

Hope, flatt'ring Paraſite, is always near,
Oppos'd to him ſtands Tyrant Fear,
Both have enough to ſay, and both by Turns engroſs my Ear.
Long they ſtruggle, but in vain,
Deſpotick Rule to gain:
Their Strength is equal, my divided Soul
Yields now to *this*, and then to *that* Controul;
And whilſt of neither diſpoſſeſt,
Both with convulſive Fury rend my Bleeding Breaſt.
Thought warring againſt Thought, like meeting Tides,
Daſh o'er each other with tumultuous Force,
O'erwhelming all within their rapid Courſe,
All rage at once, all conquer, and yet none ſubſides.

My Mind a Chaos of Confuſion ſeems,
Doubt-kill'd Expectance, ſoon as born, expires
Ten thouſand Horrors the ſhort Joy ſucceed,
And each new Thought does a new Fury breed;
Wild and abortive Schemes!
Deſpair-cheek'd Wiſhes, and untam'd Deſires,
Numberleſs, nameleſs, Contradictions riſe,
Driving, in Storms, my ſcatter'd Senſe about;
Determination her ſought Aid denies,
And Madneſs reigns throughout!

So

So, when o'er Buildings fir'd, a Whirlwind rides,
And e'ery way th'excentrick Flame divides,
Some, ſnatch'd aloft, in blazing Volumes fly,
And paint with dreadful Radience all the Sky;
While others downward hurl'd,
At firſt devour the humble Duſt, and crawl along the Ground;
Till at their Lot enrag'd, they gather round,
And ſpread vaſt Ruin thro' the affrighted World.

THE

THE VISION.

AS I this Morn, neglecting coming Day,
In the dull God's Embrace ſupinely lay;
My nobler Part, ſcorning to be confin'd,
Did upwards ſoar, and left my Earth behind:
Thro' the Ætherial Regions ſwiftly flew,
Paſt interpoſing Clouds which barr'd my View,
Methought, with ſtedfaſt and undazzled Eyes
I took in all the Glory of the Skies;
Beheld the rolling Orbs in order move,
And in their Symmetry prov'd the Art of *Jove*.

BUT long I could not in that Proſpect ſtay,
My hurry'ng Fancy made me farther ſtray,
To thoſe bright Plains where in ſuperior State,
The high thron'd Sons of Wit illuſtrious ſat:
Each had their Works in ſhining Caſes plac'd,
With Stars adorn'd, more by their Titles grac'd.
Theſe ſeem'd the genuine Product of their Art;
Which to th'Unlearn'd no Profit could impart:
But what amaz'd me moſt, vaſt Heaps I ſpy'd

Of

Of Books (the ſame Inſcriptions beautify'd)
With Pages torn, and Leaves diſorder'd, lie
Like uſeleſs Lumber, thrown neglected by.
With eager Haſte the neareſt Lines I ſnatch'd,
But e'er my Purpoſe fully was diſpatch'd,
The awfull'ſt Form which grac'd the Laureat Sect,
Did in theſe Words my erring Search direct:

In vain thou here would'ſt *Ovid*'s Softneſs find,
Or trace the Majeſty of *Homer*'s Mind:
Our forceful Fire, in faint Tranſlation loſt,
Can little of its native Vigour boaſt:
Wouldſt thou behold us as at firſt we were,
Back to the nether World again repair;
There thou thy wonder-ſearching Soul may'ſt fill
With due contemplating *Hillarius*'Skill;
In him our diff'rent Beauties center'd, ſhine
With congregated Pow'r, and Blaze divine:
Our Muſes now attend on him alone,
Join'd with a Brighter, greater of his own.
Had former Times been, like the preſent, bleſt,
Low Adorations had their Joy confeſt;
Each Path to *Delphos* had been left untrod,
His ſtar-like Fame had pointed out the God!
And happy *Britain*, proud of ſuch a Birth,
Receiv'd the loaded Tribute of the Earth.

Go then, his matchleſs Works with Care read o'er,
Juſt Admiration will enflame thee more,
Than vain Deſires of Knowledge could before!
If any Spark of true poetick Fire,
Does thy dull Breaſt with generous Warmth inſpire,
That

That Theme will call it forth, and teach thee, how
More able Pens their Gratitude ſhould ſhow
For abdicated Wit, ſo long deplor'd,
Now by his Genius, to the World reſtor'd!

THUS ſpoke the *Bard* and all the Bays-wreath'd Tribe
In Shouts of Joy, did pleas'd Aſſent aſcribe!
Then ſwift, as ſhooting Stars, the Phantoms fled
And I, that Moment, found my ſelf in Bed.

BUT, O! when Soul and Body were rejoin'd,
What various Tranſports fir'd my anxious Mind?
Not mov'd with Wonder at ſo ſtrange a Dream
(My waking Thoughts can find no other Theme)
But ſtruck with conſcious Guilt, with Shame oppreſs'd,
I curs'd my backward Muſe, which charm'd and bleſs'd
With unhop'd Favours had no Thanks expreſs'd.
In vain I rag'd, vainly did Efforts make,
My grateful Meaning, or his Worth to ſpeak!
Amazing Excellence! what Words can paint?
To deſcribe Lightning, Colours are too faint:
The vaſt Idea overſwell'd my Thought,
And all my Senſes to Confuſion brought.

As thoſe whoſe Opticks ne'er were bleſs'd with Sight,
But from their Birth condemn'd to darkſome Night.
By Miracle, at laſt, their Eyes unſeal'd,
And the bright Glories of the Sun reveal'd;
With ſudden Tranſport ſtart, with Rapture gaze,

Their

Their new-born Senſe, half loſt in wild Amaze!
So I, who but ſome Glimmerings had ſeen,
Some little Sketches of Wit's glorious Scene,
With inſtant Ruſh, all Heav'n at once diſclos'd,
Such beamy Brightneſs, 'gainſt weak Senſe oppos'd:
Shot Rays too fierce, too poinant to ſuſtain,
And, ev'n to Madneſs work'd my aking Brain!
Aw'd! charm'd! and dazzled! cool Reflections ſhun;
My ſtaggering Reaſon into Flights I run!
With incoherent Extaſies am fir'd,
Such as, of old, the *Bacchanals* inſpir'd!
What can the Medium in my Soul reſtore?
What give the Calmneſs I enjoy'd before?
Vain Hope, Nature muſt change in him or me!
I grow leſs ſenſible, or leſs glorious He!
E'er paſt Tranquillity again can be!

TO

TO *HILLARIUS*, ON His ſending ſome VERSES, ſign'd *M. S.*

IN vain a borrow'd Name ſhrouds
Light divine!
Nothing from me can be conceal'd
that's thine!
What tho' each Character wore deep
Diſguiſe,
Such as might cheat the moſt diſcerning Eyes;
My Soul acknowledg'd the magnetick Call,
And cry'd, in Tranſport, 'Tis *Hillarius* all!

BUT what, thou great Inſpirer, cou'd atone,
If Senſe deceiv'd, I had ſome Outrage done?
If ſacrilegiouſly with Scorn poſſeſs'd,
I'd torn the Paper which thy Hands have bleſs'd?
For who approv'd by thee, can ſtop to take
The little Praiſes that the Vulgar make?

TO

TO *DIANA*, ON Her asking me how I lik'd a fine Poem of Mr. HILLS.

WHY, Cruel! lov'ſt thou to torment thy Friend!
Say, to what Aim, does this ſtrange Queſtion tend?
How much I like! admir'd! ador'd thou ſaw'ſt,
When in Amazement every Senſe was loſt!

IF meanly pleas'd, we may expreſs Delight;
For moderate Themes, will moderate Joys excite:
But, Oh! when fir'd with Extaſy too great,
Tranſport-ſhook Reaſon quits its tott'ring Seat;
The fault'ring Tongue the Uſe of Speech denies,
And Thought itſelf in Height of Rapture dies!

THE great Saint *Paul*, peculiarly grac'd,
Who all the ſhining Tracts of Glory trac'd;
At his Return cou'd no Deſcription raiſe;
Heaven and *Hillarius* are above all Praiſe;

All

All other Wonders loſe their Name when known,
But he, the more explor'd, is brighter ſhown!
At every View, new Rays of Excellence
Dart from his Store, and ſtrike our ſtarting Senſe!

READ thou with Care, each Soul-extracting Line,
With what a Force the vary'd Glories ſhine!
Mark how his Thunders roar, his Lightnings flaſh!
See! the encountring Billows, how they daſh!
Obſerve the glitt'ring Legions by him led,
Whoſe God-like Aim their Influence wou'd ſpread,
Virtue to re-inſtate, and ſtrike Oppreſſion dead!
Then think, alas! thou wilt not have the Pow'r, but lie
Like me, loſt and o'er-whelm'd in Seas of Extaſy,

7 AP 53

FINIS.